



DRUM

Winter 1977-78

The Drum, Winter 1977-78

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Life

Vincent K. Washington

*I have lived,
so I think.
And when I ponder over
the riddle, the mystery, the game
called life,
I can find no answers.
But is there really any question,
for when one asks
 “What is life?”
 “What is the meaning?”
 “What is it all for?”
it is the same as saying
 “A is A”.
For it is the very nature of life
or existence
to be a puzzle without solution.
Therefore the answer to life
is not to be found in the asking,
but in the living.*



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Dedication—Mrs. Lynn Fairfax Stevens

June 19, 1941-September 14, 1977

*Look to this day
for it is life,
the very life of life.
In its brief course lie all
the realities and truths of existence,
the joy of growth
the splendor of action;*

*the glory of power.
For yesterday is but a memory.
And tomorrow is only a vision.
But today well lived
makes every yesterday a memory of happiness,
and every tomorrow a vision of hope.
Look well, therefore, to this day!*

—Ancient Sanskrit Poem

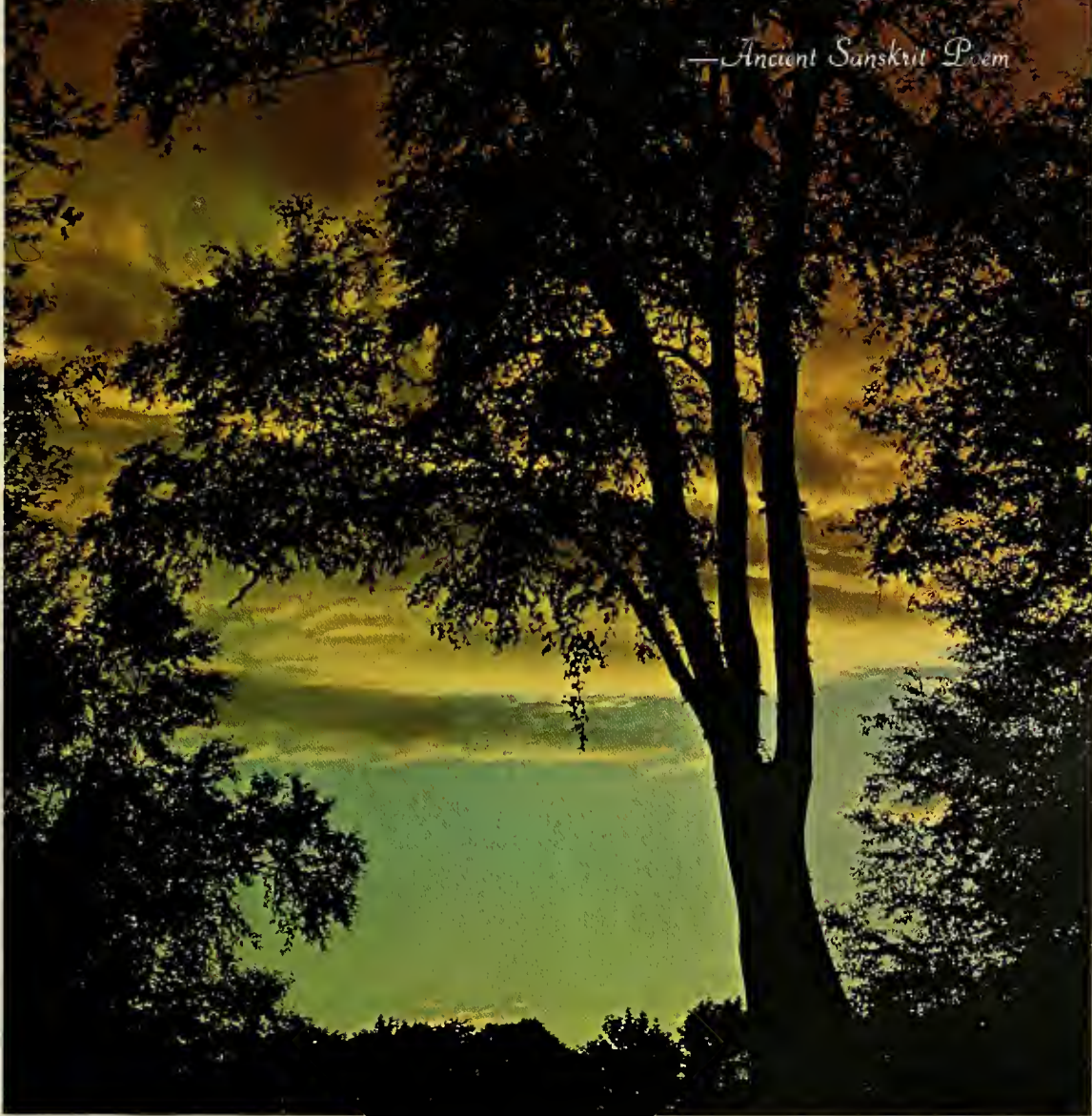


Photo by C. Adamson

Drums, beside the human voice, is the oldest instrument known to man. The first drum was probably a hollow log drum which when beaten would invoke the spirits of nature. In Africa the spirits of nature have been communicated with, through the drum for milleniums of time. The drum has evolved from an accident of nature to becoming a major symbol of life-force and rhythm in the world today. At the vanguard of the African cultural experience is the drum—in a variety of sizes, shapes, tones and methods of construction and playing techniques. The history of the drum begins with the trunks of trees and progresses to non-animal and plant made drums, and further to synthetic drums made to imitate natural ones.*

In the western culture, two forces have met and clashed: The African concept and the European concept of rhythm. Today, in the western hemisphere, are numerous examples of these divergent con-

drum is still developing its potential as a creative, expressive instrument and not merely a time-keeper.

The African style hand drum has many distinctions from its European relative, most formidably its capacity of being a constant practical force in the community. In many areas of Black America and Latin America the hand drum has an extremely high social purpose. This makes the drum very accessible to the people it sustains and that is reflected by the familiarity the people have of many rhythmic patterns. The real beauty in this drum comes from the actual performance situation. There are usually two or three rhythms occurring simultaneously and played by drums of different sizes. These polyrhythms make the drums speak melodically and rhythmically. As in the European side drum, blacks are currently the masters of hand drums (Mongo Santamaria, Mtume, Armando Peraza, Kenneth Nash, etc.). The hands on the drums has a very ancient con-

Drums In Perspective

Gary Owens and Kevin Jones

cepts. For example, take the African style of hand drum and the European style side drum on which these rhythms are played.

Particularly the power of the drum is manifested in the Americas and the Caribbean. The European style side drum, from a deep military tradition, has implanted itself deeply into the music consciousness of many cultures. (A side drum has two heads and is hit with wooden sticks). The snare drum, tomtom, bass drum, and the drum set are standard items in many American rhythm sections. Black Americans in the United States particularly excel in playing these types of drums. Excepting a few styles, e.g. European Classical, Country-Western, etc., black drummers have a consensus of "terribly bad dudes!" (from Baby Dodds to William "Sonny" Greer to Kenny Clarke and Max Roach to Philly Joe Jones to Elvin Jones and Tony Williams). This dominance of the field makes it obvious that the European style side

notation in Africa and the Americas. "Skin on Skin" has at its base a very historical reality and it is hard to discount the spiritual power of a hand drummer and his drum. Most African style hand drums have a variable physical link to that hollowed out tree trunk from the beginning.

Hand drumming in the United States did not come about until the 1940's when Afro-Cuban musicians such as Chano Pozo began coming into the country working for bands on the Broadway night club circuit. It wasn't until the 1960's when black americans advocated the use of hand drums. The sixties being a time of cultural awareness and struggle for black people, instituted the use of African and Neo-African percussive instruments (along with African dress and religion) as symbols of ethnic cultural identity.

When it became socially acceptable for black americans to play these Afro-Latin and African oriented instruments they involved themselves with R&B, rock, disco and funk bands. Since there were very few accessible hand drum teachers, brothers began learning on their own by ear. Thus, each developed a style all their own.

The drum can be heard as the heartbeat of almost

*The spirits of nature were phenomena that caused superstition and respect from the peoples they naturally encountered. E.g., sun, moon, stars, fire, thunder, etc.

every kind of music played today. The drum serves a different purpose in the different types of black music; a disco drummer makes you dance, parade drummers make you want to march and sometimes shout and holler, a black classical ("jazz") drummer brings about thought, some hand drummers play for the sake of rituals and religion. Drums are the fundamental movers of music heard all over the world.

These percussive instruments have a certain sensuality which attracts immediate response from the listener. It's not just the drums themselves which have such a magnetic attraction, but the African, Afro-Latin and Afro-American people who contain a certain force that makes the drum a symbol of life, vitality and spirituality.

Dear Rahsaan,

Yours is a legend that has not been hailed enough. Yours was an uncommon adventure. I only hope we can somehow live up to the ideals you preached about while using the wind to create time and space . . .

*. . . We remember how you played three saxophones at once . . . and after your stroke you came back to blow those notes again . . . to play those songs again . . . you know, those songs that make you feel like things **are** better.*

*You blew,
You chanted,
You waved your arms
and wildly ranted.*

*You documented the trails
of others . . . Trane,
Prez, Duke, and all the rest.*

***You** played the tunes for them . . .
For Charlie Parker and Lee Morgan . . .*

. . . and Jimi Hendrix, the interstellar brother of the 'six-stringed laser', he learned to search for the notes and songs that would make time stand still while he parachuted in the voodoo skies. He always studied from the Book of Rahsaan 'Roll-On' Kirk.

Your impact was much broader than you realized. The time you spent with us was . . . and the time you now have is . . . and the time that has passed since others made the trek before you was . . . Your spirit shall remain with us forever. We shall not forget. We shall not relent . . . "Blackness" and "Saltpeanuts" . . . and "Bright Moments".

*. . . The **Youngblood** shall be exposed . . .
. . . The Youngblood shall be transposed . . .
into disciples of the next world . . .
the world that **includes** and never **excludes**.*

Michael L. Jackson
© December 1977



"Entrance to Gus Jones' Bar" by Bernice Robinson/Frank Thornton

CHE LUMUMBA SCHOOL

. . . And always there are the children

THIS GENERATION, ESPECIALLY OF OUR PEOPLE, HAS A BURDEN, MORE SO THAN ANY OTHER TIME IN HISTORY. THE MOST IMPORTANT THING THAT WE CAN LEARN TO DO TODAY IS THINK FOR OURSELVES.

Malcolm X

The Che Lumumba School is located in the New Africa House of the University of Massachusetts. It is situated on the fourth floor, with five rooms. It was founded in 1972 by a group of students disenchanted with the public schools of Amherst as well as with the effects of these schools on their children. These students had been involved in major political struggles in the University as well as outside of it. Since all the original people were 'teachers' our only recourse to the problem of Public Education, as it related to third world children, was the development of the Che Lumumba School.

Public education in the valley has reached an amazing level of sophistication. With the use of teaching machines, open classrooms, audio-visual paraphernalia and social-psychological processes, the business of education races forward. However, as in all races, there are the winners and the losers. In this case, as in many others, the losers happen to be that great number who seem always to be in the minority.

Minority. That vast pool of people who never seem to quite make it, who cannot hold a job and who everyone points to when welfare costs go up or urban conditions go down. Those minorities. People of color who have no future, no present and had no past. Those people whose ancestors, rescued from their native land and were fortunate enough to survive a leisurely cruise across the Atlantic came to a new world of milk, honey and cotton plantations. We minorities who send our children to school only to have them lose more and more of their identity.

Public education races on, never looking to either side, into the future. Never seeing the racism, the sexism, the class division, genocide or any of the horrors which have become the backbone of this

country's greatness. Never acknowledging the presence of civilization before the cross and the gun. An almost total loss of history, a subsequent loss of identity.

The School for Truth is an independent school designed to effect an independent lifestyle for Third World people—i.e. self-determination. The School recognizes the objective condition of Third World people in the World, that being politically factionalized, economically dependent, and socially victimized. Similarly, the School realizes that American education is part and parcel of the same system that oppresses Third World people. The indications of inadequacy of American education are apparent in the textbooks, inferior facilities, poor teaching, etc., while the indication of failure is most evident in the few number of Third World people who possess the skills, talents and values that are needed by our communities to relieve us of our oppressed condition. The intent for the creation of the School for Truth is to focus upon an area where we can have maximum effectiveness in reversing this situation—Third World education. The School for Truth has defined education in terms of the learning styles of our people and what Third World peoples believe the aims and ultimate goals of education must be. It is an education for Third World interests designed to give Third World children the knowledge, skills, and values conducive to developing a commitment to the liberation of Africans, Latins and Asians everywhere.

When the Che Lumumba School opened six years ago, it was with one child and an idea. The child's

(Continued on page 17)

CCEBS

Interview with Michael Jackson by Robert Burton

Dr. Jackson, what is your position and what are your duties in the CCEBS Dept.?

My official position is Executive Director of the Committee for the Collegiate Education of Black Students. My duties entail the supervising of the administrative functions of the program including: supervising a staff of about sixteen full and half time people and about fifty tutors and guiding these staff members so that they can help approximately 550 students to achieve academic success at the University. So that involves a lot of different kinds of things. It includes being aware of different kinds of programs that are established on this campus and to make sure that our students are aware of them and take advantage of them; it includes being aware of political situations on campus to make sure that our students are not unfairly treated and are able to take full advantage of academic resources and the different professors on campus. My duties also include nominally supervising the Financial Aid portion of the program. I work with Art Jackson in the Financial Aid Office to make sure that our students get their fair share of financial aid and my duties also include working with Muriel Wiggins in the Admissions Office to insure that we get a full complement of students each year—to make sure that we get students who have the potential to succeed here at the University. Basically, those are my duties.

When, why and by whom was the program established?

CCEBS was formally established in 1968; it had its initial beginning in 1966 when a group of faculty, staff, and students got together and decided that there wasn't enough minority representation on campus, especially since this was the largest public institution of higher education in the state and at that time it was thought that there were only about

forty minority students on this campus, and that there were more at a place like the University of Alabama than there were here at the University. So, they formulated what is now commonly called CCEBS and decided that what they would do was establish a program that would be designed to recruit, financially support and academically support minority and low income students who wouldn't necessarily get into other institutions of higher education. They came together at that time under the leadership of Randolph Bromery and a few other people to design and implement a program.

Who makes up the CCEBS staff?

The staff is comprised of 8 full-time professionals and eight half-time graduate students and about 50 tutors. The CCEBS staff used to be comprised of primarily half time people but it was decided over time and based upon experience that what the program really needed was as much of a full time staff as possible. So, since Carol Brooks and I have been directly involved with the program we've moved from having primarily part-time staff to primarily full-time staff. You'll find that we have people who have either their Bachelor's or Master's degrees in Education, Psychology or in another related field. The staff primarily consists of people who have had experience in counseling undergraduate students who need academic support and who need guidance in making decisions about school.

What types of students does the CCEBS program cater to?

Well, the program is designed to work primarily with students who wouldn't necessarily get into

other institutions of higher education, as I mentioned before. So we have a number of students who have gone to high school where they really haven't received the kind of attention that they really needed but we've brought them here because we recognize that they have the potential to succeed in college and we've set up a system for them to work through that will help them to academically achieve. We also have a good group of academically stronger students. We have some students who really don't need that much help but who need more exposure to, I think, minority concerns or the concerns of black and third world people; the concerns of Asian people. So we have students on both ends of the spectrum. We have students who are academically prepared and we have students who are not necessarily academically prepared but we try to bring those two groups together and hope that they'll influence each other very positively.

Are transfer students eligible for membership in the program?

Yes. We have a number of transfer students this year. This year we received our largest group of incoming transfer students and that's about 35. They come from community colleges throughout the Commonwealth and some from four-year institutions. We'll be getting a large number of those students especially with the rising costs of tuition around the state and with the lowering of the number of credits needed to apply. I think that a lot of these students are finding that they can get more for their money here at the University than they can at a lot of other private institutions in the state.

What criteria is used in deciding the first year student's acceptance into the CCEBS program?

Well, we look at some basic kinds of things; we look at the student's high school grades and how well the student does on the scholastic aptitude test (the SAT), we look at recommendations from their counselors, from their teachers or possibly from civic leaders who may be their reverend or their pastor or someone that they've worked with at a special program like Education Opportunity Programs or Upward Bound—that kind of thing; and we look at whether a student has been involved in extra-curricular activities like the publication of a newspaper or the publication of a year book or involved in the various clubs that you find at high schools. What we're looking for is students who



Michael Jackson

have tried to have some rather well-rounded experiences while they're in high school. We also look at whether or not they've had part time jobs. I think that you'll find that a lot of our students, because of the financial background of their families, had to work while they were in school and that has probably prevented them from being able to give all the time necessary to doing a really good job in high school. So we, in essence, take all these ingredients and we try to come up with the composite picture of what the student will be able to do once he/she comes to the University. In some cases we interview the student. Sometimes we get student profiles that we're not really sure of after we review them on paper so we invite the candidate to visit and talk with us so that we can get a better feel for what they might be able to do. We look at all of those things and try to come up with a guideline or an indication of success. We're looking for people who want to be successful and that's really the major thing.

In what way would the Supreme Court decision in favor of Bakke affect programs like CCEBS all over the country?

That's a hard question to answer. I would say—I can only answer in terms of the situation here at the University and it's somewhat different than it would be at a lot of other campuses because of the fact that we do have a large number of minority students on campus. If you look at the percentages and how we fare in terms of the larger population on campus, we're still small in number but, if you look at the minority and some majority faculty and administrators on campus and the kind of commitment that they have demonstrated over the last few years I doubt if a negative decision in the Bakke case will have a totally detrimental effect on the CCEBS program. I think there is commitment on this campus to have a program like CCEBS that can bring realistic numbers of black, hispanic, asian, native americans and low-income students on this campus. I think you will find that we are committed to that and if you really analyze the Bakke case you'll find that when the majority of the California Supreme Court initially decided the case they said that they were in agreement with programs like CCEBS. They felt that it was fine to have programs like CCEBS as long as they didn't "reverse discriminate" against other groups, and I think that if you just take that as a face value statement, you'll find that CCEBS doesn't do that. We have white students in our program who are full-fledged members and who take advantage of our resources. But, no matter what happens, we will carry on and we will be very forceful in making sure that our students get served on this campus and that they are able to take advantage of its resources because this is something that's very necessary and very vital.

What academic services are provided to the students?

CCEBS is designed to provide academic services in several areas. They basically include academic advising where we sit down with students and we help them design their courses of study, select their majors, and figure out what teachers are the best teachers for them to work with based upon how they best learn. That is, some students are better in small classes as opposed to large classes and we try to help them figure that out. We provide tutorial support for students in any classes that they feel necessary—unlimited tutorial support. We have

academic advisers who will sit down with the students and help them work through any kinds of problems that they're having in their classes. They help them figure out a calendar of how their time should be spent on campus. That's something that's very important and something that we're very concerned about. How do students monitor their time, how can you be able to take advantage of the social aspects of this campus as well as the academic aspects. That's something the academic advisors are very involved in. We also provide a study hall which is housed in the Shirley Graham DuBois Study Lounge and that's basically designed to give the students a quiet place for study. We have a library that we purchased books for; basically these are books that are used in the primary courses, we have books for core courses and some supplemental courses. What we're trying to do there is give students the opportunity to stretch their dollars for buying books. They can buy some books and they can come and use the books in our library and that gives them the opportunity to be in New Africa House a little bit more. This also gives them the opportunity to come and use the library and then be able to walk into their advisor's office and ask questions on a more informal basis. They can also meet with their tutors there. There's a lot of different things that the academic service component provides. We work with CASIAC, we work with the Registrar's Office to make sure that the students' records are kept up-to-date. Briefly, that's it. We also provide personal counseling and graduate school and career development advising.

What is the general attitude of these students towards the CCEBS Program?

You'll find student attitudes on several different spectrums. I think you'll find some students who are positive about the program who take advantage of it. I think you'll find some students who aren't totally aware of the services that the program provides and there are various reasons for that. Students have to get busy quickly; that would certainly be the case for some of the transfer students or some of the first year students who haven't had as much involvement with us as those students who have been on campus for a number of semesters. I think there are a number of students who are somewhat negative about the program and there are various reasons why. I think (maybe I'm biased because I'm Director of the program) but I think a lot of it has to do with either misinformation or lack of information. I think some



"I Am A Black Woman" by Nelson Stevens

students aren't really sure about what they want to do with themselves so they don't really know how to take advantage of services that the program offers. I'm not trying to make excuses for them, but I think that there are some students who, if they do have some negative feelings about the program, it might be because they haven't come to challenge us and say, "Look I need some help, can you help me?" I think that if you interviewed the students who we have helped, you'll find that they are pretty positive about us. I think those students who we really haven't had a chance to get our hands on so that we can ask what is it that they need, and what is it that we can help them do, might be negative about the program. There are some students who are in academic jeopardy and they tend to be the ones who we are in the closest contact with and some of them are positive about it and negative at the same time. I think they feel that they're growing up now and they don't want to have a surrogate family here on campus but that's what we tend to try to want to do with students. So I think the viewpoint the students have about us is very broad. It can be negative, positive, in between, it depends upon how well they're doing sometimes, that kind of thing.

According to the CCEBS students (past and present academic achievement) how successful has the program been in inspiring and motivating them?

That's a good question. CCEBS has been very successful. If you look at its record over the past ten years, you'll find that we've graduated over 600 students, we're graduating students at a per cent rate that is a little bit better than the University rate. We've had students who have gone into different kinds of professional fields. We've had students who have gone into Engineering, Medicine, Law ... students who have gone on to earn Masters and Ph.D.'s; students who have gone directly to professional business and other professional fields, like dentistry; students who have gone into journalism, that kind of thing. We have students who are now principals of schools. I think you'll find that CCEBS, by in large, has done very well. We, just a couple of years ago, had to do a survey for the Provost's Office. In it we found that CCEBS, as I said before, is the oldest academic support program for minority students in New England and was the largest, the most stable, in terms of staff, budget and financial aid. So I think if you talk to some of the alumni who are off doing things, you'll find that not only CCEBS

but the University of Massachusetts has treated them fairly well or has been able to, at least, provide them with enough resources to take advantage of and feel pretty prepared when they get out. I think that there are a number of other students who have come through CCEBS who haven't necessarily gone on to law school or to different graduate schools or to high paying jobs but I think that they've found that their experience here has opened their eyes to the point that they now realize how prepared they have to be to be able to get out of life what they want to get out of it. I would think that CCEBS is doing a pretty good job of motivating students. But I also know that we have much farther to go. I think that by having more full time staff (this is the first year that we will have had so many full time staff members) we will be able to motivate students much more successfully because we'll be working with them in a more in-depth way than they've been worked with in the past when we were relying on graduate students and half-time people who were concerned with the program but at the same time they were concerned with getting their own business straight. I think we've been pretty successful in the past and we'll be pretty successful in the future.

What kinds of services are provided by CCEBS in assisting the student's social adjustment in a primarily white educational institution?

Well, that's something that CCEBS isn't totally responsible for but something that we work on. We're primarily an academic support service but you cannot totally divorce that from the social aspects of this campus. If students don't feel comfortable socially and they can't relax, then they have a hard time concentrating on their studies. We tend to work hand-in-hand with the Afro-American Studies Department, the Black Cultural Center, the Malcolm X Center, the Third World Affairs Office, and the various programs our students have designed themselves: the Black Scientist Society, Afro-Am Society, Black Mass Communications Project, Ahora, Asian Students Association, that kind of thing. What we try to do is work with them to sometimes co-sponsor events. We try to do in-depth counseling with students to try to determine if they are having problems adjusting to campus life. That's a very important problem but that's something that's very difficult to do. You don't want to totally engulf the student with CCEBS. We want the students to be independent of us and yet work with us at the same time because we want them to get prepared for what

is ahead of them four years from now. That's kind of tough, but like I said, it's something that we're not totally responsible for but we primarily work with the other groups that foster this.

What services does the CCEBS program provide for its graduates in terms of graduate studies and placement?

Well, we have a new component which is called the Career Development Component and that component is designed to not only provide information on graduate schools and professional schools for our undergraduate students but it also is there to serve our alumni who come back, who are looking for jobs, who are looking for information about different kinds of opportunities that are available. Initially, what we've found is that most of our alumni are able to situate themselves. That is, they've been able to go out and find their own jobs; they've been able to make their applications on their own or they've been able to make applications to professional schools in conjunction with our academic advisors. This component does keep information on all the graduate schools in the country and all the different kinds of organizations that are established to work with minority and low-income students. We keep information on financial aid, on fellowship opportunities that are available for graduate school. This component does a pretty good job of that but it's only been in operation for a year and a half now. We'll see where it goes from here. I think that its primary concern will be to give exposure to our undergraduate students and to help them develop and conceptualize what life is about after four years of undergraduate school. So, it's really a career and life development component for the students who are on campus now and to help those students who come back for help.

What are the CCEBS financial aid services prospects for the future?

In terms of financial aid, our students can look forward to getting their financial aid to maximum of what their financial aid statement indicates. Primarily, that includes the need expressed on the parent confidential statement or your student financial aid statement. Financial Aid has been able to provide a combination of work/study, grants and low-interest loans to our students so that they're able to meet their minimum needs on campus. It looks very positive in the future and I don't see any slackening of support there as long as students get their forms in on time and academically achieve.

What outside criticism has the CCEBS program been the recipient of?

Well, I would say that initially CCEBS probably received (I've only been here for the past couple of years so I can only speak in terms of that and what I've heard about the past) the kind of criticism that would indicate that the program did not follow through with students, sometimes there would not be enough opportunity for students to get a chance to know the staff and to learn about them so that they can feel more comfortable with them. I think we've been criticized for being too academically oriented in the past and I think that's been because people didn't really know that our mandate and our function was—and still is—to help foster academic achievement on campus. I think that CCEBS received some criticism about its ability to motivate students, but then again, I think that's also a function of the fact that CCEBS has really been inventing the wheel on this campus in terms of how do you go about providing academic support for students who are in real need of academic support. It's pretty easy to provide academic support for students who you know are very well prepared, who have the ability to be able to negotiate a system like the University of Massachusetts by themselves. But, CCEBS has been developing as well as operating the program at the same time. That's been kind of hard and that's really been because in the past the program has had to go out and search for funds to run itself each year; has had to operate the program with a half time staff; and I think those criticisms were justified but I think that now CCEBS has improved a great deal and has made a lot of strides so that you don't find a lot of those criticisms any more; given the fact that we do have professional people who are interested in working with the students on a full time basis. So I think you find a lot of those criticisms have pretty much subsided, but that's not to say that we can't improve. I think that we can.

As the Director of CCEBS, what (in your opinion) is the future of the program? Where would you like to see the program go and do?

I think the future is very bright. I think that we have proven over the past few years, that you can make a program like this very successful. I think our students have proven that they can come here and with a little extra help achieve as well as any other student on this campus. I think that what I would like to see CCEBS do is become an academy within the



"Icons of the Sun" by Pam Friday and Margarita Vargas

University. By this I mean that I would like our students to come through here and get very rigorous training and get exposed to professors who can impart knowledge and really help them learn. I want them to work with professors who can really stretch them, and by stretch I mean really push them to try to learn something they've never learned before and to take risks academically. I think that I would like to see CCEBS expand and be able to get more students. Right now we have about 550 and I would like to see us have about 650 to 700 students. I would like to see CCEBS become more involved in helping other institutions around New England tighten up their programs and figure out strategies for them to become more institutionalized. So I think that if you look at CCEBS, if you look at the different people that are supporting us, our Board of Directors with Dean Darity, Fred Tillis, Fred Preston, Dovi Afesi, Bob Suzuki, Julia Fata, Chester Davis, to name just a few, I think you'll find that we have a good mix of people behind the program as well as out front. We have a lot of people behind us who are on the line really trying to make the program reflect our motto of "Excellence Through Involvement". You've got people in Financial Aid; you've got Arthur Jackson, Bernadine Edwards; you've got Muriel Wiggins in Admissions; and Bob Daniels and Janice Wertz in the Dean of Students' office; Jimm Simmons over in the Student Development Center. There are a number of people around campus that we work with that really make this program what it is and they're going to be here, hopefully, for a while. We've got a good group of young students; they help to give us a very good reputation, so we've got a good foundation to build on. I think that the program will be very successful in the future as long as we work at it and don't get complacent about what we've done in the past. We must remain concerned about the future. If we do this, we'll be okay.

Do you foresee a time when the CCEBS program will not be needed?

Based upon the past history of this campus—no. I think we'll always need a program like CCEBS to keep people honest. You need a program like CCEBS to give the kind of student that we're looking for the kind of attention that they need. If we're committed to getting students who wouldn't necessarily get into other schools, but at the same time we feel that we can bring them here and work with them, then I think we will need a program like CCEBS here at the University.

(Continued from page 9)

name was John, the idea was to preserve and enhance his identity as a Third World child. As more parents and children came into the school we developed a philosophy of education which is the foundation of the school today.

With our opening, many problems beset the Che Lumumba school. Certification, space and funding became priorities. As one obstacle was overcome, another arose. The first year saw many long hours with few rewards, but the dedication to our original idea became the impetus which helped us to survive.

In the following years we expanded our staff and enrollment as well as conceptualizing our idea of theory and practice. Our curriculum also reflected our ideas on education by incorporating the political community, locally and nationally, into the children's studies. It was our feeling then, as it is now, that in order to survive we had to work with and in the community around us. Thus developed a non-sectarian relationship with political organizations in Western Massachusetts, as well as other parts of the country. Further, local and national radical leaders have visited the children of Che Lumumba.

Political prisoner Martin Sostre, Big Black from Attica, Puerto Rican historian Loida Figueroa, and Native American Yvonne Wanrow to name a few.

The identity of a race of people can be traced through its culture; music, dance and poetry, all the arts play a part in who we are and where we come from. We feel that the children should be able to relate to and identify with other cultures. It is for this reason that the school places such emphasis on sponsoring cultural activities. Not for the school alone but for the greater community as well since oppressive reality **must** be overcome with a new reality of personal depth and international solidarity.

So we speak of identity and culture, but what does this mean? First, these are not theoretical concepts with no base in reality, nor are they words which we speak of in idle talk. The search for identity occupied an entire generation of people who had all of the benefits that this country could offer. The identity crisis of the 60's is still fresh in our minds.

The Che Lumumba School is in existence so that our children will know their history and live their lives with a sense of that history, of pride, of strength and of power.

Jose Tolson
Che Lumumba School
New Africa House
UMass
Amherst, Mass. 01003

IN MEMORY OF RAHSAAN ROLAND KIRK RAW SUN ROLL ON

Prelude/Birth

Split glint miss stick in an unhollowed voice
Waiting for a date with time
He blew dust into soul sources
He was primitive paint
Leaf dye
A foot print
Bark mold
Dried blood
A holla
Holla bones
Be up front
Being all un-before notes

Chorus

*The hawk is snow tears of strength
In an inverted triangle of thought
Chanting a date with festival, mystery and delight
He was chemist
Mask maker
Galactic linguist
Family architect
Foetus struggler
Papyrus paddler
Reed guide
Homager*

Coda

A voice unhollowed in time hollers
At the glint of a blown date in time

Resolve

Kirk, Kirklo, Kirkemble, Kirkette, Kirkestra
In a borderless island chain
Intoning celestial dreams, and the rest is dreams
He was terminal funk
Nebula crust
Monongehela healer
Infinite kin
Kindling finity
Ethno-nasalologist
Arch naturicist
Blues guerilla
Space villager
Flash juba stomp swing strut cuss
And glide through creation

Bill Hasson
1977



Rahsaan Roland Kirk by Edward Cohen

ANDREW SALKEY: THOUGHTS ON THE THIRD WORLD

by Stanley Kelley

Biographical Note

Professor Andrew Salkey was born of Jamaican parents in Colon, Panama, in 1928. He was educated at St. George's College and Munro College in Jamaica, and at London University in England, where he lived for twenty-four years.

He started teaching poetry and fiction at Hampshire College in September 1976. Professor Salkey takes a great interest in creative writing, generally, and gives poetry readings and talks throughout the Five College Area. He is a friend to all his students whether they are white, black or Third World. He is very close to Third World people in the Valley and at Hampshire College where he actively participates in the events of their campus association.

He enjoys teaching very much at Hampshire, and says that he is picking up a lot of new learning experiences from the students there whom he finds affectionate and supportive.

Andrew's writing is addressed to all Third World people. He writes clearly and sincerely because of the example of their struggles. He takes writing seriously and everything else he does, both educationally and politically, and considers these activities in-puts into the continuing struggles of Third World people. He has affirmed that he could never be anywhere as near an anchored poet and novelist as he tries to be, if he were not linked into Third World concerns. He stresses the fact that a profound anchorage of some sort is usually essential to the serious pursuit of most human activity. He strongly believes that it's up to all of us to search for and find the anchorage that best suits our personality, experience and work.

Andrew has written five novels, eight children's books, two volumes of poetry, one short story collection, and two non-fiction works. He has also edited seven anthologies of Caribbean writing. His most recent publications are **Writing in Cuba since the**

Revolution, an anthology of poetry, short stories and essays, and **Come Home, Malcolm Heartland**, a novel, which depicts life among the black revolutionaries and intellectuals in London.

SK: Where is your original home?

AS: I was born in Colon, Panama, in 1928, but Jamaica is home. Both my parents were Jamaican, but, yes, I was born in Panama, near the end of the boom-town years.

SK: I have heard of your deep interest in folklore. What is the folklore like in Jamaica?

AS: Well, for one thing Jamaica has a very vigorous folklore tradition, and practice. There is an African, a West African basis to our culture. A strong one, in fact. It's there in the way we speak English; in the way we look at the world; in our songs, in our folk stories. Our great folk story is the tale of Anancy, half man, half spider. I seriously consider the Anancy story to be Jamaica's first piece of literature, Jamaica's primary oral literature. The whole idea of the folk for me is the strength of our culture in Jamaica and throughout our Caribbean. Some misguided people rather like claiming that the cultural vanguard in Jamaica is the middle class. I claim no such thing. That's nonsense. Our folk, which is peasant class, working class, is really our people; I mean that that's the bulk of Jamaica, Jamaica's true strength.

SK: What's your attitude to the political struggle in Jamaica?

AS: In the 1930's, during the colonial struggle, there was a definitive struggle against the British, an anti-colonial struggle, clearly so. Today, we have a very hard-edged confrontation against imperialism, right across the spectrum of imperialism and its myriad manifestations, against the way it sucks your economy, your creativity as a people, your life's



Andrew Salkey

blood, your wealth, and the way it leaves you dry and hopelessly dependent as a client state. Today, there is a government that is struggling, attempting to be a socialist government and facing overwhelming, fearful odds, at home and abroad; in fact, it's an experiment in democratic socialism, unsure of itself, and up against powerful opposition; it is still half-and-half. It isn't socialism, just yet. It's a government that is blocked in by terrible contradictions, a government that is still a custodian of foreign and local oligarchic capital, and yet it is a government that is trying desperately to protect the larger interests of the bulk of the nation. I am deeply interested in what's going on back home; I am also interested, very, very deeply interested, indeed, in the fact that the working class is taking a greater interest in government than it has ever taken before; and that, to me, is extremely heartening, and also threatening to the status quo. I like that!

SK: What's your attitude to the struggle in South Africa?

AS: I can tell you that I am overjoyed, even though I might be considered a cautious optimist about nearly all the struggles throughout the Third World. I, like a lot of my own contemporaries, always felt very, very depressed about black liberation in South Africa. When will it break through? Will it *ever* break through? I am passionately interested in the lessons that black South African politics and the liberation movement can teach and guide us by, almost day by day. My attitude is very positive, yes. I would use the word happy; I really feel happy about the breakthrough on the part of our black people in South Africa. The most remarkable thing about that breakthrough, and I haven't heard many people, either in Britain or the United States, talk about this, is the fact that it was the very young, really young people, who broke through, at home in South Africa,



Stanley Kelley

at home, mind you, all elementary and secondary school children, not college students or intellectuals, or even the working class; it was the school kids who broke this overwhelming silence; it was and is their revolt and their power of revolution, entirely theirs. I am so overjoyed about this, I tingle with great expectations every time I think about it. I am excited, and I think we will win. I am sure we will win.

SK: When did you start teaching at Hampshire College, and how do you feel about it, now?

AS: I started teaching, if teaching is the right word, poetry and fiction, at Hampshire College, in September 1976. At first, I really thought I would have had a few Third World people in my classes. Nobody told me this, but I just sort of hoped that that would be so. Well, it turned out not to be so, largely because our own Third World people are very busy in other spheres, in other academic Schools, at Hampshire. What I have managed to do, though, is to be a friend of virtually all Third World and black students, here, on campus, and off campus. I frankly think that that's far better than merely being their class teacher. By the way, I'm strongly inclined as an anti-teacher teacher. I really can't stand teachers who are willful teachers and teachers only. I'm sure that my anti-teacher position makes it easy for me to keep on learning and keep on keeping on in the world of my students. Of course, I miss the Third World representation in my two Workshops. Mind you, they show me their work, even though it's not within a course or within a class. I like that. I see the poetry of a very small number of black students, here. I am very close to them, without intruding, and I belong to their campus association which is also mine, actually. How do I like teaching, now, after a year in the job? The short answer to that is: I'm learning a great deal. This isn't a fancy way of a middle-aged person saying that he's learning from the young. I really mean to be sincere. I'm picking up a lot of things that I didn't know before, about human relations, about the pain and disillusionment of the young, about cracked dreams at that level of development, about a very small part of life in the United States. This country is brand new to me. I like the unconscious use of the word "brand", there. Yes, you must remember that I'm a Jamaican who has spent twenty-four to twenty-five years away from home, and twenty-four of them in England. So, culturally, I am at a distance from the United States, but I'm not at a distance culturally from a man such as yourself, because you're black and we do share a common pain in being black. I couldn't be removed from you; I'm a part of your whole thing, your world. With regard to the

population of this College, I am a bit of a stranger to some of the wealthy, white students and their cultural overview within the United States and capitalism, and that takes a little bit of getting used to, you know. There's a pushy exterior and a pie crust of impoliteness and even arrogance that one meets almost daily. I no longer meet it, though; some people have heard that I won't put up with that kind of nonsense. But I am learning a great deal; I am learning about, for instance, the reliance most American students have on teachers. I didn't realize how dependent most of you were, in that respect. Very teacher and course dependent! Not much self-reliance about! Not much, at all! There's something in the United States, some sort of atavistic edict or other, that seems to say that you need teachers for every damn thing. Where I think you should be standing on your own two feet, I catch you leaning hard on a teacher who must entertain you, at all cost. Where I come from, in Jamaica, we had excellent teachers, if I may say so, but we also believed in fishing for ourselves in deep waters; we taught ourselves by taking in massive doses of reading, listening and exploring on our own. We had to find out lots of things for ourselves. Some of us were very independent intellectually at a very early age, and we learned every difficult thing the hard way, and many times without bothering to consult the teacher. But over here, if a poem is to be written, the average student-writer wants to chat about "the process" before he or she writes the poem, and after the poem is written, the poet wants feedback, almost immediately, as though the life of the poem depended on that, exclusively. I find that very bothersome and tedious. At least, I found it so, at first, simply because I myself as a kind of writer had and still have no real recourse to that sort of thing, nor do I think it wholly desirable for my own sense of initiative and self-reliance. I was a little more independent than some of my Hampshire writers and friends in the Valley, I suspect. I really loved finding out things behind my teacher's back; I loved finding out things on my own, meaning that I would read and read and read a lot of books. I notice that many of my students are not much for reading, or self-improvement through reading on their own. They're not good long-distance readers and not good long-distance information-gatherers. Most of my students come to me with fairly empty high school bags, which, I know I have to top up, however best I can, and all in one short unreal semester. I suppose I'm trying to give them what little I picked up along the way, at home and in England. I'm giving back to my writers in the Workshops all the bits and pieces I picked up along

the way, in my time, as a poet, novelist and so on, and as a student myself. I picked up a great deal from sources other than the teacher and the classroom. A tough way, but a very rewarding one, the business of helping yourself! Now, this is bound to sound startlingly eccentric, but instead of students leaning so pathetically on teachers for feed-back, self-regard props and other spurious aids, I would like them to start making teachers run after them for their inventiveness and self-reliance genius, especially at a place like Hampshire. It can be done. But quite large numbers of bright students deny their native intelligence, inventiveness and self-reliance genius by chasing after teachers as feed-back props. At times, I wonder if it isn't an exercise in vanity and bucking egotism on the part of one or two students. Just a thought, yes! But, you see, students, on the whole, insist on making doubtful gurus of their teachers. I don't like that. I fight it, nearly every day. Indeed, teachers hold quite an intellectual and creative hegemony over some of their students, which I deplore. I mean, just as a person, myself, I deplore that state of affairs; really and truly I do. Yet, are those teachers wholly to be blamed, d'you think? I certainly think not. I fancy, though, that not a few of the High School teachers should take the heavier part of the blame, and also those families who by favourable and fortunate circumstances are blameworthy.

SK: What is the relationship between poets and the political struggle in Jamaica?

AS: In the 1930's, all of us saw quite clearly that the poet was not an outsider to the political struggle, simply because he or she was a citizen, first of all. We have a marvellous gift of beautiful poetry from those poets in the Thirties. They gave us back quite clear and profound images of what our struggle against the British was like. In fact, there was a very vigorous kind of political and artistic fusion surrounding the poets and painters in Jamaica, at that time. They wrote and painted as they lived, socially and politically. I consider politics a human activity in the same way I consider writing a poem a human activity. The artist is not a stranger to political struggle, especially if the artist also happens to be poor and living in a society up for grabs by large economic forces. That speaks directly to the artist, I think, and it is bound to find its way into his or her creative work, somehow, however implicit, however fully stated. Wherever there's exercise or show of power, for good or for ill, the truly creative artist is sensitive to it, as citizen and as artist. And power and relationships of power are always outside one's front door, somehow.

SK: What are the differences between contemporary modern African poets and traditional African poets, and how has the poetic tradition changed?

AS: My reading and my London conversations with many African writers, people like Chinua Achebe, Wole Soyinka, Cyprian Ekwensi, have led me to believe that the traditional African poet saw himself or herself as part of the spiritual and total civilizational basis of African culture. You see, the first African poets were not speakers of words. Sometimes they were remarkable drummers and their drumming was their poetry and the drum-skin the source-words of their poems; and sometimes a singer and a dancer made their poems out of the movement of their limbs. I would guess that routine, rhythm and ritual were, for a very long time, the traditional African poet's materials. The gods were never up in the sky somewhere but down on and in the ground, aiding and abetting the production of poetry, from time to time; and, by the way, African gods are always at man-level, woman-level, not supremely removed, far away in the sky. In short, the traditional poets always saw themselves as a part of the practice of religion in African society. Contemporary modern African poets have going for them the printed word. They also have the microphone and the radio. They have lecture halls and auditoriums, where they stand and read their poems. Now, I have a very funny view of this, especially about the printed word; I believe that modern African poets might not be so very popular as the traditional poets, because the modern poets have moved slightly away from a mass audience. First of all, in order to get to the poem on the page, to Chinua's, Wole's, mine, on the page, you have to know how to read, so automatically that bars the so-called "illiterate" African lover of poetry; whereas the song or the drum or the religious-poetic festival didn't, in the sound-shape of poetry. Then, of course, quite a lot of modern African poets are writing in English; and that's another hassle for the poetry-lover who hasn't got English. Yes, the printed page has been a bit of a bastard. It bars the transmission someone like Chinua cherishes. The drum music didn't, in the shape and sound of the drums. You could pick this up; you didn't need to be educated and literate, according to some other set of rules. I have no doubt that as soon as you put your poems in book form, you put a distance between yourself as a poet and the rest of your non-reading people. There are very, very many of us who are disadvantaged, because we have been on the immediate receiving-end of imperialist policies, because we have been ruthlessly exploited for centuries; I would like you to read "Letter from a Con-

tract Worker", a political love poem by Antonio Jacinto, an excoriating indictment of Portuguese imperial rule in Africa, which tells us about African illiteracy and its seed-bed, imperialism. You see, coming back to your question, just a small elite can cope with the books, pamphlets, broadsides and so on. So, I imagine that the modern poets aren't getting their poems as far and wide as say the traditional poets, who were able to get their work right across the country. Of course, because it's now in book form and in English and in translation, too, a great number of outsiders and a lot of students and teachers and critics are picking up on African poetry, where they didn't before. When the poet was exclusively a religious person, a drummer, a dancer, poetry was rather locked inside Africa, then. But there's a sad irony about it all. It is very curious that as soon as poetry hit the books, it hit the outside world. Now, very many people know the work of African poets, yet it is very interesting that the book has taken the poetry far outside Africa and not nearly far enough inside Africa. I am looking to African education to put that right.

SK: How are your poems, novels, non-fiction and your anthologies associated with the liberation of black people and Third World people?

AS: If there weren't a struggle, struggles for liberation, I don't think I could begin to be the sort of poet I want to be, to tell you the truth. I'd be some other kind of poet whom I might not want to be. So, what I'm saying in a sort of back-handed way is that I am attempting to write in a certain way because there is this struggle, this widespread struggle in our time. I have the chance of becoming a poet of a certain kind of seriousness because there is this enormously serious struggle going on in our world. Yes, I consider everything I do as an in-put into the struggle. I take writing seriously, and it is an intensely painful process for me, incidentally; I find it extremely difficult to do, and often I just give up and wait and wait and wait for the right words to come with the right dream hovering over them. When I tell some of my Hampshire College writers how difficult I find writing, they smile as if to say, "Ah, he's putting us on!" If only they knew! At times, I dislike the whole business of writing, and want to chuck it for good. So, it's true to say that I'm attempting to take writing seriously; I believe it is a part of the struggle, and not only in our Caribbean or in our Africa, including Afro-America, but throughout the Third World. It anchors me nicely. Moreover, I would not want to be that other kind of poet: the rather private, personal, hermetic, introverted, aimless, pretty wordsmithing poet. The struggle does give you anchorage. You

know you've got to make up your mind; you've got to extend one commitment two ways: your love of poetry and its demands, which are struggle enough, I can tell you, and your sheer humanity to liberation struggle; and then you've got to say to yourself, "I want to write as clearly and sincerely and poetically as I possibly can, because of the struggle." Please, I want you to know that I'm only hitting and missing in my own work, at the moment. I'm nowhere near where I'd like to be. I'm doing it my way, and it's tough. I live with a mountain of failed poems.

SK: If there are a hundred men and women like you with your commitment, what changes would you foresee?

AS: Let's say that we could humanly estimate the energy that has gone into the momentous social and political changes in my own lifetime; just one of those changes would call for the energy of millions of people. The changes in my life have been pretty large, yes. Now, there are things I no longer want. There are things I no longer dream about. There are certain things no longer necessary for me, no longer necessary to make me function as a man and as a writer, no longer necessary to make me hold on and see the night through to morning. Other things have become very essential, crucially essential, like the meaning of my writing, for instance. The view I now have of my writing is not the same view I had of it when I first started out, years ago. I now think, quite honestly, that my writing belongs to others and that what I write is the patrimony of others to come, the possession by right of others. I can't imagine a substantial change, coming back to your question, with only a hundred people doing it my way. We would need more than just a hundred; we would need a vast number. Let's forget me. I know I'm not really ready in any significant way, in any way to be a model or anything like that. Let's, instead, talk about all of us as models. Well, we would have to get turned on by an educational system that would try to turn out new men and women in the hundreds of thousands, and then in the millions. And you know what we're talking about when we say that? Right! We need a great agent of change, a massive social change from the roots over, an up-ending that would really convert that hundred into millions. I think what we feed ourselves with educationally, politically, will determine who we are, later on. Education is seepage. The same for the politics of change. We will need millions of new men and women, much better prepared than me, differently educated, differently turned on, differently disposed in ego and dream and intention, to make the revolution and to secure it meaningfully.

MARCUS GARVEY

By Kim Hill

Marcus Garvey's day of Triumph was imposed by an intolerable reality. Right before the startled eyes of thousands of spectators, a mighty new black nation was unfolding itself marching down Lenox Avenue in Harlem. The line of the march seemed endless and meant the emerging of a new world spirit.

Who was behind it? Marcus Garvey the leader, the creator. He was not a man to hide his light under a bushel. Never one to give an advantage, or let the attention of his audience wander. Garvey followed up this master stroke with a series of dazzling moves that changed the tone and texture of race relations in America. Garveyism meant black militancy and was only calling for the liberation of Africa and the migration of some African-Americans.

Marcus Garvey was a man of great determination. He wanted to know where the Black man's government is? Where is his king and his kingdom? Where is his President, his ambassador? Without wasting any time, his brain was afire with the possibility of writing all the Black peoples of the world into one great body to establish a country and a government absolutely their own.

He formed and organized the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA), an organization designed to establish a Universal confraternity among the race. Racial tension had reached the crisis point in Black America and Harlem. A lot of people were migrating to the North from the South and the West Indies. These migrants brought new

hopes and new fears, and they were threatened by new forces.

The first great war to make the world safe for democracy had disillusioned and radicalized black soldiers and large segments of the black population. There was, at the same time, a sharp white backlash in the white community, which was demoralized by the war and terrified by the new forces unleashed by the war. One result of all this was a nationwide resurgence of the Ku Klux Klan. Another was the development of a national mood of nativism and racism. From the time of Garvey's arrival to his movement of triumph, America was wracked by a rising tide of lynching, racial confrontations and riots. This gave more energy to Garvey's goal.

Garvey told his story wherever he could find a listener. He preached a new doctrine of black regeneration and black renaissance to anyone who could listen. Garvey was contemptuous of traditional black organization. He insisted that other blacks accept their skin color and their destiny. He believed that "Black" was not only beautiful but redemptive. Believing so, he gave a positive value to everything black and tried to give his listeners a new sense of their potentialities.

As a result, the organization he formed was more than an organization. It was a revival, a way of life. It had life in it and thus, it united the black race, there was a flag, red (for the blood shed by the race), black (for the color of the race), and green (for the land of the race).

YVONNE JOHN and the WEST INDIAN COOKING OF GUYANA

by Catherine Adamson

As a part of Guyanan culture, children are taught to cook at about age five. By the time a child reaches eight or nine years old, cooking is like second nature. So it was with Yvonne John. She has very much liked to cook since the age of eight. At age twelve, she helped her father with the business he owned, and by the time she reached fifteen she could manage it.

After finishing high school she took Home Economics courses and began exploring and writing recipes. After marriage, she and her husband catered together, Yvonne doing all the cooking. Folks enjoyed the food which is mainly fresh vegetables, chicken and fish. Because her philosophy on food is "the fresher, the healthier," she uses no canned foods (beef and pork are also generally eliminated).

She attended a technical college in Los Angeles, while catering in Santa Maria Boulevard as well as in

Beverly Hills. She then came to the Pioneer Valley. Her first jobs were in the Campus Center. She went on to set up a non-profit organization in New Africa House at U. Mass. She became well known in the area. Because people liked the West Indian food so much more than the American food, she cooks only in the West Indian style.

Shortly thereafter, some (white) woman in the Valley heard that she was a "famous cook" and offered her two dollars a recipe for two hundred recipes. After having talked this over with a number of friends, she realized how potentially exploitative this offer was. This incident was one of the major motivating factors in Yvonne's decision to write a cook book of her own. Also, since her graduation from high school, she has collected numerous recipes and kept them on file, having the desire to expose American black people to Guyanan food.



Yvonne John by Edward Cohen

One of the book's goals would be to display the economical and exotic elements of Guyanan cooking.

Next we talked about the educational system in Guyana. She prefers the Guyanan over the U.S. system. One difference is that in Guyana children start school once they are able to talk, whereas in the United States a child must wait until he or she is at least five years old. As a result, one may graduate from high school as young as fourteen. Yvonne believes there is too much emphasis on sports in education here, whereas in Guyana, the concentration is on the education and sports are on the side.

Yvonne asserts that there is no real racial tension in Guyana, although a few years back, Prime Minister Chedy Chagan agitated racial tensions between the East Indians (i.e., Portuguese, Chinese, Aborigine) and the Blacks. The Indians were led to believe that they were better than the Blacks. At present, with Prime Minister Burnham, there is peace and unity.

Everyone has their own culture, but all denominations participate equally.

She noted that people in Guyana are in general much friendlier than those in the United States. Much to her discouragement, while visiting in Springfield, she encountered a few exemplary incidents. Passing another black woman on the street she asked, "Excuse me, sister, can you tell me where the Office of Discrimination is?" The woman turned and caustically replied, "I ain't your g..d... sister; you have an accent!"

For a while she was hurt and disappointed with American black people and could not relate to their separatism. But while going to school at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, she discovered a different and better attitude. The people seem more receptive and open to her, "although there are a few bad ones in between," she says. So for now the Pioneer Valley is blessed with having Yvonne John and her fine West Indian cooking.



Photo by Edward Cohen

THE MURALS OF CCEBS

By Margarita Vargas

During the summer of 1977, three student artists were commissioned by CCEBS to express their artistic views on walls and doors of the New Africa House at the University of Massachusetts/Amherst. Nelson Stevens, professor of Art and Afro-American studies at the University directed the students' labor.

CCEBS is the Committee for the Collegiate Education of Black Students. CCEBS offices and student facilities are located on the second floor of the New Africa House.

There, at the New Africa House, Puerto Rican student Margarita Vargas painted murals on seven office doors including those of the career library and the Upward Bound project. These door paintings vary in content, style and use of color. The colors brighten up the halls and atmosphere of this working office area.

For the benefit of all, CCEBS also has a large room which is a comfortable study lounge, library, and a place where small meetings are held. In this room, two 8' by 10' murals were painted each by John Kendrick and Frank Thornton. Both artists are graduate students graduating in 1978. John is from New York and Frank, from Washington, D.C.

Frank Thornton's mural is an underwater scene. A symbol of life. The amoeba is centered among various schools of fish, swimming about the depths of the sea. The combination of tropical warm colors, cool colors and overlapping shapes give an atmosphere of both tranquility and gaiety.

John Kendrick's painting expresses the "spiritual development and aspirations of man and woman."

The figures sway in rhythmic motion across the surface of the wall. The colors used are basically cool purples, blues and greyed tonations. Both murals are done in an overlapping technique. This adds more interest and depth to the walls.

With these murals, the lounge and the hall attract the students and others to feel more comfortable in the New Africa House.

The CCEBS program funded the project, paid the students on an hourly wage during six weeks, and bought the materials. Its director, Michael Jackson, was interested in refurbishing the building through use of cultural works of art related to the students' cultural heritage. He was successful and very pleased with the results.

Margarita Vargas was again employed to paint three more office doors during the fall semester. Some other artists also received three credits as an independent study through the University's Art Department.

During the past three summers professor Nelson Stevens directed Mural Programs in Springfield, Massachusetts. A total of 29 murals have been painted by various student artists of U.Mass. and Nelson Stevens, himself. These murals are gifts for the people and stand as monuments of part of the progressive mural movement of the 70's.

As student artists, we are looking forward to the organization and approval of federal funds for the Summer Mural Program of 1978. This will enable us to continue to educate our people through cultural gifts, by means of our artistic expressions, and serve as an incentive for the communities.



Mural in Shirley Graham DuBois Lounge by John Kendrick

POETRY EXPLANATION

by Sharleen Dickinson

To bring truth where there are half truths. To make peace where there is turmoil. To give beauty where there is nothing but ugliness.

As a writer, each individual has the opportunity as well as the obligation to look at life the way he or she wishes to see it.

A journalist is dominated by some restrictions. The journalist tells the news. He or she delivers facts and through the development of their own expertise, the journalist may be able to slip in his or her personal statement. But their primary job is to relate the event as it is.

The creative writer, specifically the poet, is obligated to follow the demands of self expression. The poet takes his or her feelings about a situation and expresses them on paper to suit themselves. In the process of this written self expression, those of us who read the finished work may be able to relate to the feelings expressed but the factor that keeps the writer apart from the reader is that he or she has interpreted their feelings in a way that is truly their

own and then, had nerve enough to put those feelings on paper.

The factor that makes the poet unique is that he or she tells the complete story with a minimum amount of words. He or she presents a mental picture and leaves much of the interpretation to the reader or the listener. The poet's message is in two parts: his or her message comes in what is said and the rest comes in what is not said, just, perhaps, implied.

Poetry is comparable to looking at a photograph in the negative and seeing just as much or more as when you look at the same picture in the positive.

Poetry is the laughter down the hall. Poetry is a scream of desperation. Poetry is the secret you hide reluctantly from the rest of us. Poetry is the self contentment when you have no secrets to hide.

Finally, poetry is what is written by a poet. And a poet is a man, woman or child. A poetess is similar to the unicorn: a part of some one's imagination, but nothing you or I will ever get to meet.



THE SUN IS MY LOVER

*Silently, with amber touch
He rouses me from sleep.
The very warmth of his nearness
gently eases me awake.
Anxiously, I throw back the sheets
and beckon Him to share with me
the last of the fleeing night.
Sensuously, He stretches himself
before me,
and smiles that dazzling smile.
Such a restless and demanding partner.
How the growing morning brilliance
becomes Him.
Luxuriating in the glowing radiance,
I am sure His love will last.*

by Sharleen Dickinson



"FESTAC '77 Women" by Nelson Stevens

RISING VERSE

*i
an egg
hatching from
a sinner's womb
learning to function
educational tasks
in a pressurized time span
to delay me from questioning
the need to die in man's world of words
without ever seeking GOD's universe . . .*



Graduates by Edward Cohen

CLIMATIC VERSE

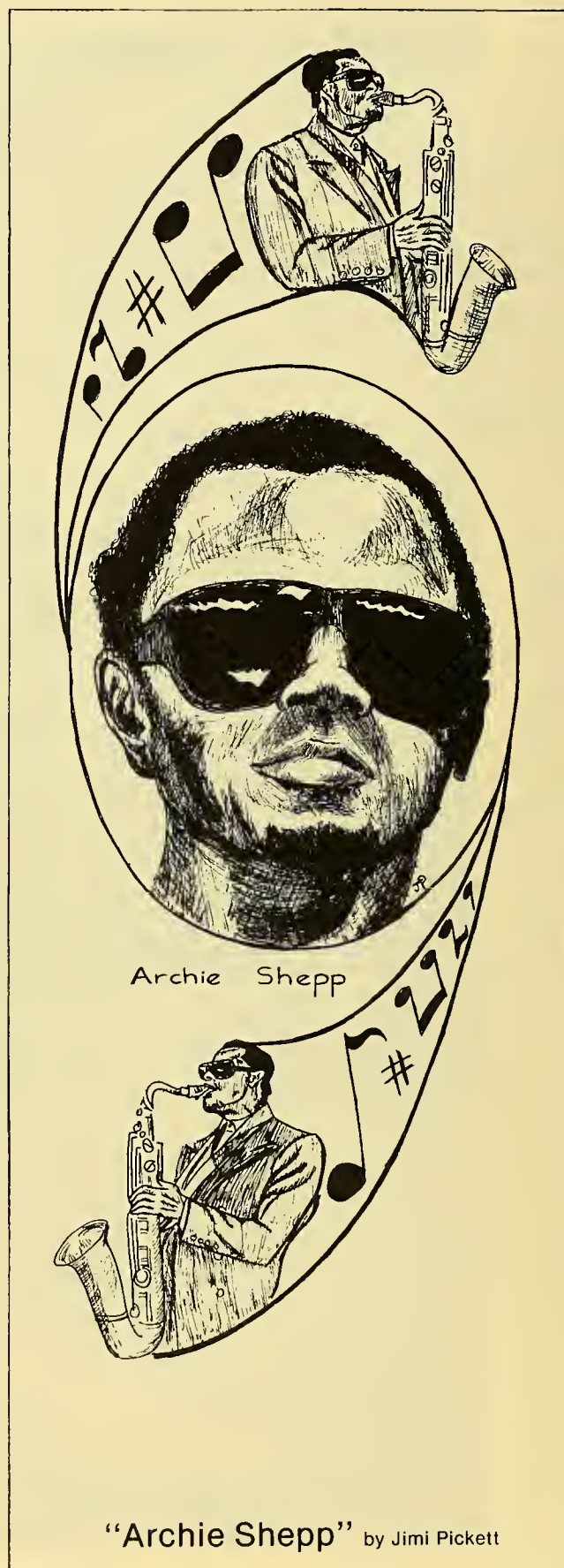
*yes
I said i loved you
i said we would be as one
but time made us like oil and water
close but always separate
so did i love you?
no*

by Sterling Rex

PARTY

Surrounded by cool black breezes
thru silent playgrounds
But yet contained within artificial
dim light and air hot and heavy
Heavy tho not still
I hear-steady hum and babble of voices
I see many colors; yellow, tan, beige,
brown, and black
But yet all one color, one people
It seems the place will burst
flinging laughter and loud music
into the cool black breeze.
Fire, Life, Blood, Heritage all contained
Feel of excitement, of elegance, of friends
A feel of innerjoy, I belong
Feel of sadness over all my people
Feel of indignation angry energy
Feel of weariness for all the struggle
one color, one people all contained.

by Zakina



"Archie Shepp" by Jimi Pickett

MARCUS GARVEY

*Harlem was used to spectacles
Harlem was used to dreams and dreamers.
Harlem had seen everything, and heard
everything.*

*What was the meaning of this?
Who was behind it?
Who was this man?*

*Marcus Garvey—
One of the dreamers,
One of the shooting stars that streak across
the Harlem sky from tune to time.*

*Marcus Garvey—
The one never to give up an advantage
and courage.*

*It meant black pride, black power and black
self-reliance.
To some men then, and to some men today,
it meant "Back to Africa."*

*Talk was cheap,
Substance and shadow were so inextricably
intertwined.*

*Marcus Garvey
A man with a destiny to the Promised Land,
Left behind a legacy of exploded hopes and
mammoth accomplishments.*

by Kim Hill



Marc Fairfax Stevens by Edward Cohen

MANAGING

*A woman with manacles on her hands!
Turned away, like an untouchable,
in the market, wrenched wide for profit,
humiliated, where it burned, like despair,
nightmare loss after nightmare loss,
she counted the knots in the ribbon
of the years of happiness she had had,
when her dreams were young and hers
and spread out round her on the ground,
clusters of hand-cupped roses in her care.*

*And then, she walked out, alone,
into the blaze of the backyard sun,
pretending, as she stumbled along,
that, in fact, she had left the dark room
and all the skewering hurt behind:
her small daily triumph, her ritual
of get-up-and-leave-regret-to-history,
for yet another night, yet another year;
her own lonely way of lasting out,
her only way into the sun, her way.*

*Light and shadow, surely rituals change?
Shadows don't persist. They, too, disperse.
Rituals change. They usually do. They will.*

by Andrew Salkey

HARBOUR VIEW

*If he kills himself, suddenly, tomorrow,
by hanging her land on the north claw,
she and her children will be left alone,
pincering deep into the wise, open sea.*

*If he kicks over the philosophy of waste,
and opens all the broad harbour windows,
she and her children will look at the land
and the sea, clearly, as their patrimony.*

*If he does neither but merely waits around
and stares into salt space philosophically,
then nothing at all will be done either way,
and living and dying will become an evasion.*

*If that's the case, she'll certainly know
he's not to be trusted, and then, finally,
she'll mould her children into closed petals,
and break through the serrated pain herself.*

OLD MAN AND THE LAST DAY OF MARCH

People walking quickly past the grey
air and cool winded afternoon,
going to and coming from where
they have been and got to go.

One old man in dark brown skin
and light brown threadbare staggers by,
cane extended
from hand to ground.
Moving slowly through the middle
of swift people, all
looking busy and important and
almost out of time.

The old man stands in
front of me and
tap, tap, taps, his cane
wringing up his face
to a frightening black and
pink, putty mass of indignation.

I'm not the unfaithful wife
who left you and the rice
to burn as she swayed
down the road to where the men
were working.

The old man still stands
tapping and looking more
evil and making me feel
sweat under my arms.

Move on old man.
On down the street,
into your own world,
your own time.
Tap your cane to the beat
of your own pulse.
Give me back my public privacy
and let your business
be your own.

by Sharleen Dickinson



The Uncle: "Reg of Hollywood" by Frieda Jones

409 EDGECOMBE AVENUE

This mirror has hung on the wall for years,
life sweating within gold-rimmed splendor.
It once was the livingroom crowded with musicians
jamming after gigging with Parker down at Minton's,
once was an inspired eye
after the brisk, great-coated walk
up from the club,
after three or four lime-lidded Beefeater
gin and tonics,
eyeing Mavis as she drops her fox stole,
body curving bravely through
the satin cling;
was calloused fingers, gripping dripping
ribs and bass;
was light silver, as dawn frosts Sugar Hill
and clouds drop like a pearl necklace
across one hundred and fifty-fifth street.

Was his lips descending through the mirror's embrace
to meet her lips, to caress her creamed coffee arms,
her fragrant marcelled hair;
hands on breasts, 1948 . . .

** Performed in Tiny Pyramids, Goodman-Jones, April 1977 -*

by Frieda Jones

A POEM ON SOUTH AFRICA

THEY SHALL LONG FOR THE ICY COMFORT OF DEATH
AS THEY CRINGE FROM THE PLACE OF
OUR HATE-PATH'S DESTRUCTION

GOD FROM HEAVEN SHALL SEND FIRE TO THE SKY
THAT SHALL SHED NO WARMTH AND NO LIGHT
UPON THE FRIGID, STINGING EMBERS THAT SHALL
RELENTLESSLY, RELENTLESSLY, RELENTLESSLY,
RIP, AND RAPE, AND TEAR AT THEIR SOULS

THE EARTH SHALL OPEN AND SEIZE THEM AS HER PRISONER
FOREVER—
AS HELL, AND ALL THOSE WHO PAY HOMAGE TO ITS
GOLDEN, AUTOMATED IDOLS MOCK THEM
AS I DESTROY THEM
AS WE DESTROY THEM
SENSUOUSLY SAVORING THE COOLING WARMTH OF THEIR
EBBING LIFE'S BLOOD

REJOICING AS OUR ANCESTORS RETURN TO LIFE THROUGH
OUR DESCENDANTS
WHO SHALL KNOW THE SUN AS IT RISES AGAIN.

Copyright 1976

by Bradley V. Scott



"Impressions of South Africa" by Catherine Adamson



FEATHER

*I am as a feather.
The louder you speak to me
the further removed I
become.
Approach me calmly and
carefully and I may
light upon your hand.*

by Vincent K.
Washington

Diana Ramos by Edward Cohen

on 5 compositions of Roscoe Mitchell

*they always play it different in new york/fast city
nothin clean about the place
no such thing as one hand clappin
or like the purity of only one horn & the hall
you can hear it talkin
like hard times & bent slugs
fast city in ya music
hear it cry fast moanful cries
violins step in / i hear ya fast city
music of the way back/ way out ahead
of the knife-fendered traffic
of the lowceing 5 flights blues
in peeling browns & rust-edged dangers
i hear ya fast city
burstin all through the pure
with the lost gone gangster tones
blast me back through the scag & jump of it
the rob & steal of it
to the stomp joy and sweet completion of it
in remembrance of the brightness
the sound of one sound slappin snappin & grabbing
the round of it/ the lost the found/ the hollow of it
i hear ya fast city
long gone bipblap kick rumble
kicks & rumbles back again
loose hairs of discontent
fall like lint upon the players coats
one eats oranges and shoots the seeds down the slide
one leans big boy falls against the chest
he lets his feet fly and march
one says he has true dreads
plays stripper funk in the spaces
sweet intensity/ i hear ya/ fast city
pluggin on the deaf insistence of blind horsemen
stompin dumas' clouds
out from under/ in sky/ stomping
the music/ splattered with spit & sweat
the gone ones' blood*

2/8/76—studio rivbea, nyc.—players: roscoe mitchell; julius hemphill; phillip wilson; joseph bowie; muhal richard abrams; leroy jenkins; george lewis.

Part I: tahquemenon; tecumseh; olobo; eckter five. Part II: nonaah

by Thulani



"FESTAC '77" by Nelson Stevens

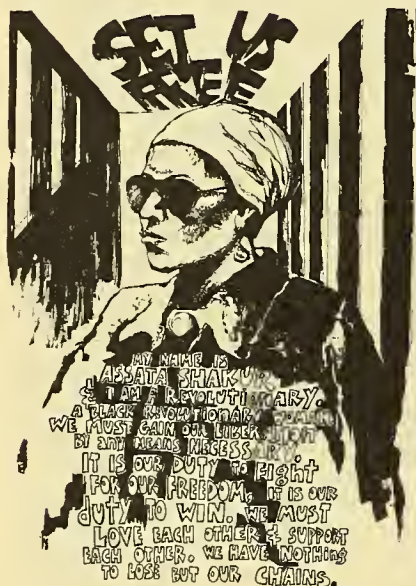
last revolutionary poem

*those of us who are left
are ganging for one last fight
ganging arms & fears
almost paralyzed in hope
anxious wait
stashing our last poems
our last bloody epitaphs
eulogies & dying scenes
for one last fight
those of us who are left
are choking on the desertions
the bliss of riches run to
by dancers from depression's discos
until the day/ until the day
when we sit together
on the edge of our chairs/
our seats in carriers
our knees aimed to the ground
our prayers pouring hushed
from the store chests of our long slept hearts
our jujus clustered on our necks
our logics sworn
a token slit is made on wrists for the blood/shed
the blood shed with fear
shed with the final chains/the diamond fetters
& rust broken cells as we are our own
it will be the last time we say the last of the past.*

© copyright 1977, Thulani

by Thulani

TO THE SISTERS AND BROTHERS WHO HAVE SUPPORTED ME



I first wanted to thank you for all the support that you have given me and secondly to say right on to the stand that you have taken against the government's persecution program against Black revolutionaries. By supporting me and other revolutionaries you have taken a stand against racism, against sexism, against oppression, against capitalism, against imperialism and against the genocidal war being waged against Third World people. By supporting me you are supporting Black people's right to national self-determination and the struggle to acquire that right.

From the beginning, we knew that it was highly unlikely, if not impossible for me to get a fair trial in Middlesex County, N.J.

One—because of the constant co-optation by ruling classes of the masses of working peoples, coupled with their complete control of technology and information, makes the so-called democratic process null and void and thus created the hysterical, slanderous and racist press coverage that surrounded this case.

Two—because of the press coverage, over 70 percent of the people in racist Middlesex County were already convinced of my guilt.

Three—because the judge was racist and blatantly prejudiced in favor of the prosecution.

Fourthly—and most importantly, because there is no such thing as justice in amerika, especially for Black and poor people. History clearly shows that in the course of the development of modern western society, the code of law is the code of the dominant and most powerful class, made into laws for everyone. Law is never impartial, never divorced from the economical relationships that brought it about.

So, this is not the time to feel depressed or defeated. This is not the time to forget about struggling, or to forget about all the Sisters and Brothers who have been railroaded into these dungeons. Rather, it is the time to feel outraged, to feel determined, to fight against this government tooth and nail, not for what it is doing to me, but for what it is doing to us all.

This railroading and legal lynching of me is but one drop of blood in the ocean of blood and suffering that the amerikan government is responsible for. As i am writing this now someone else is being railroaded or shot in the back. We, the people, have lost this battle, but we will and we must win the war; the war for liberation, for justice and for freedom. The war for our children and for the future of the world. I have no faith, nor have i ever had faith in this government or in this system of injustice. Black people must learn to no longer have a psychological dependence on racist "legalities". It is the people who will set us free.

*In struggle,
Assata
(Joanne Chesimard)*

To visit Assata Shakur write:

*Martha Pitts
20 Ave. A 20
New York City, N.Y. 212-674-0949*

You can write Assata Shakur to:

*Jo Anne Chesimard
600-77-402
1515 Hazen Street
E. Elmhurst, N.Y. 11370*

*For further information, contributions, etc.: Contact
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San Francisco, CA 94110*

CUBA YESTERDAY & TODAY

by Margarita Vargas

Cuba is a long and narrow Island, 780 miles in length from east to west, and some 25 to 125 miles in width, with an area about the same as that of Ohio. It is 50 miles west of Haiti, 85 miles north of Jamaica, and 92 miles south of Florida U.S.A.

Although Cuba is the largest Island in the West Indies with a total area of 44,218 square miles, it is still a small country, yet its history has a significance out of proportion to its size.

It is impossible to understand the Cuban revolution and the revolutionary regime which came to power on January 1, 1959, without understanding the historical development which long preceded it. The revolution in Cuba today has its roots deep in the past. The story of Cuba's struggle for liberation from four hundred years of Spanish domination is one of the great epics in history. The story of its struggle for over a half century to change its status from a theoretically, independent state, dominated by American imperialism, into a truly independent country is equally inspiring.

The histories of Cuba and the U.S. had been intertwined almost from the inception of American independence in 1783. Early American solicitude for Cuba stressed strategic factors. Cuba must remain in friendly hands. While a weak Spain posed no threat, French or British control endangered American interests.

Because Cuban insurgents refused to accept Spanish rule the bloody ten years' war, the first of the struggle against the mother country, Spain, erupted in 1868. The rebels sought aid abroad, especially in the U.S. Americans smuggled arms to Cuba for the insurgents, congress men and President Grant voiced their support. American involvement in the Island's affairs continued.

The conflict ended in 1878. Spain emancipated the slaves but little was done to quiet local demands for self-government, and the bickering between Spain and the U.S. dragged on until fighting broke out again in 1898.

No single motive explains the participation of the U.S. in the Spanish American War. Popular sympathy for the rebels, Spanish "atrocities," Americans'

dreams of world prominence, the need to protect the projected canal across Central America, American interest in Cuba, and the sinking of the battle ship Maine—all encouraged American intervention. Of the wars waged by the U.S. the Spanish American proved least costly in lives. In return for an empire that embraced the Philippines, mid-Pacific Islands, Puerto Rico, and Cuba.

With Cuba free from Spain, the Americans turned their attention to the job of formulating diplomatic ties with the Island and preparing the Cubans for self government. The U.S. and Cuba were not ready for this task.

At no time was the intensity of Cuban resentment of American diplomacy exhibited more fully than during the Constitutional Convention of 1901, which debated whether to include the Platt Amendment in the national charter. Cubans ratified the Platt Amendment to their constitution because no alternative existed.

No Cuban nationalist has ever forgotten that humiliation. On the eve of independence, the Cuban nationalist attitudes toward the U.S. evolved. This amendment imposed on Cuba in 1902 permitted Washington to intervene in local affairs, curtailing the Island's political and economic independence.

The Cubans had to live with the Platt Amendment for three decades. The debate over the Platt Amendment plagued politics until 1933, for all political parties took a stand on the doctrine.

Whether by accident or design, during the Platt era Cuba fell into the hands of politicians friendly to America. For example Estrada Palma, the first president of Cuba and a long time resident of the U.S., acquiesced to Americans demands for naval and coalition stations thus granting the U.S. what is known as Guantanamo base (1934). That base alone, nevertheless, kept alive friction between the two countries.

In the three decades of American political domination of Cuba, businessmen and capital from the U.S. won virtual control of the Cuban economy. Spain had supplied the basic ingredient, but Americans mechanized the sugar economy and transformed the

Island into the "sugar plantation of the world." A fundamental incompatibility existed between the colonial sugar industry and the dream of independence. The patrons of nationalism had frowned on the "parasitical industry." The evil of the sugar industry together with the social, economic and political forces of the development of Cuba made the revolution of 1959 inevitable. Nationalism offered Castro the means by which to win popular backing, endorsement of his drastic reforms, and support in his battle against the allies of the U.S. on the Island. Anti-American nationalism thrived especially among intellectuals who were convinced that to achieve true freedom—an increasingly popular aspiration—Cuba must drastically modify or sever its traditional relations with the U.S.

Finally in Castro the Cubans discovered an extraordinarily gifted political prophet and leader who, with his bold challenge to Batista, not only captured the imagination and loyalty of the young but in the process managed to clothe himself with the mantle of Jose Marti first of the great Cuban revolutionary figures. Undoubtedly the political and economic conditions in Cuba paved the way for Castro's surprising success.

Does not the fact that Cuba had a one-crop economy, dependent upon and completely subordinated to the economy of the U.S. help to explain the revolution? Or that the political policy of the U.S. in Cuba for 60 years was to support any government, however tyrannical and reactionary which gave normal protection to the U.S. interests? Or that Cuba's average yearly per capita income for the period 1950-1957 was around \$213, as compared with \$829 for Mississippi, the poorest state in the U.S.? Or that

before the Revolution, the Cuban unemployment rate normally stood at 25%? Or that Cuban land ownership was concentrated in so few hands that 8% of Cuban farms accounted for 71% of the total arable land? In other words Cuba's economic domination by American big business resulted in the exploitation of the Cuban people.

As a result of the Cuban revolution, socialism is being established in one of the smallest countries of the world. Efforts by the U.S. to destroy it—the unilateral ending by the Cubans sugar-quota system, the severing of diplomatic relations with the Cuban government, the sponsoring of the C.I.A.-organized invasion of Cuba, etc.—have failed. Today in the year 1977 the U.S. has a new approach towards Cuba. It is trying to renew diplomatic relations. Hopefully, the results will be positive for both countries, but extreme precaution will prevail at all times.

A result of the Cuban experience, millions of Latin-American common people have been impelled to examine the basis of contemporary society. A growing number of them are beginning to find, as did the Cuban people, that their lives cannot yield them an adequate degree either of physical or mental satisfaction as long as their countries remain dependent upon and completely subordinated to the economy and politics of the U.S.

Source of information:

A History of Cuba and Its Relations with the United States by Philip S. Foner

Cuba The Making of a Revolution by Ramon Edwar-do Ruiz

Revolution and Reaction in Cuba 1933-1960 by Samuel Farber

CUBA

Interview with **JOHNNETTA COLE** by Margarita Vargas

Vargas— Have you been to Cuba?

Cole— My first trip was in 1972 and since then I have been to Cuba 8 times.

Vargas— Why did you go to Cuba?

Cole— I would say there were 2 things that attracted me to Cuba and those 2 things keep my interest in Cuba. One is academic and the other is political. As an anthropologist I am particularly interested in what some people call the Pan African world. Better put, in all the cultures in the Western

Hemisphere that have a close relationship culturally and historically with Africa. But I am also interested in how all these countries, P.R., Haiti, the U.S., Brazil and Cuba, all of these countries are tied to Africa not only by culture and by history but because they share the same kind of experiences particularly the experience of exploitation, that is, it's a Western Hemisphere country who has a definite tie to Africa. But I have also developed an interest in Cuba because of what Cuba stands for. Because my opin-



Johnnetta Cole

ion, in a very genuine sense Cuba has developed a very different way of life that in fact represents a free territory in the Americas.

Vargas— Why did you become interested in the Cuban issue?

Cole— It could fall into three categories. I've been to Cuba on delegations for example for an MPLA conference, that is MPLA of Angola. The second kind of category would be going to Cuba in connection with the Venceremos Brigade. Every spring we send a group of northamericans to Cuba to work, to live, and to see the Revolution for themselves. I've had other kinds of trips to Cuba which are oriented towards my ongoing research on that whole question of racism in Cuba.

Vargas— Did you have a free choice to go to other parts of the island?

Cole— Certainly there are places where you can not go. For example, I have never attempted to go to the middle of a military installation, I have never gone to the door of a prison and knocked and said let me in; but I wouldn't do that in this country either. With those exceptions I've been where I wanted to go, and obviously as my Spanish has gotten better that has meant that I can talk with lots of people. So I have the feeling that in eight trips to Cuba I've been able to get a real sense of what that Revolution is.

Vargas— How were the means of transportation for yourself and the Cubans?

Cole— I think your question is really about fundamental social services and whether they are available to the Cuban people. The answer is yes. Early in the morning and in the evening are of course the times of heavy traffic and all those times taking a bus is an experience in Cuba, unlike rush hour in a

big U.S. city, but what one pays to get on that bus is equivalent maybe to 5 cents in this country. For many Cuban workers transportation is free. It's free in the sense that a bus comes and picks up workers going to a construction. Compare that 5 to 50 to get on a New York City subway. What is more important than the cost is what the conditions are. Nobody is going to attack you in a bus in Cuba, you are not going to fear that your pocketbook is going to be stolen. A woman is not going to fear that if she takes a bus at 3 a.m. she'll be sexually assaulted. In that sense transportation really represents not only the providing of a social service at a cost that people can easily afford, but it symbolizes what the quality of life is in Cuba.

Vargas— How did people respond to you being an Afro American interested in their lives?

Cole— Cubans that I've been in contact with have a real sense of what the struggle of third world people is in this country; it's on that basis of struggle, not on the basis of skin color or language but on the basis of the correctness of our struggle. People in Cuba want to know what's happening, for example on the Charlotte three case; what is the latest situation on the Wilmington ten; what is unemployment like in the barrios and ghetto; what's happening in Congress with the Black Caucus? There is this tremendous interest and association and identification with our struggle as third world people.

Vargas— How do the people of Cuba get all this information?

Cole— I have had some really shocking experiences in Cuba that relate to this. I mean for example walking down the street and having a little kid, I mean a muchacho, come up to me and asked me the most

detailed question about some political happening in the U.S. My experience is that Cubans and I am generalizing now but I mean from the little kid all the way up are incredibly well informed and you don't just breathe it out of the air, you get it first of all by a free newspaper called the *Granma* which has as much news internationally as it has national news. This is why Cubans who work in construction, Cubans who are young people in schools, old people would be able to tell you what is SWAPO, they will be able to tell you what's going on. They can run down to you the current legislative bills that are important in the U.S. Congress, they can tell you these things because of that source. Secondly Cubans are involved in mass organizations and through these mass organizations there engage in study circles. For example through the Federation of Cuban Women engaged in political discussions, through the committees for the defense for the Revolution where 80 somewhat percent of all Cuban adults are members, there are study circles in every organization, not just the Communist Party, and the Union of Young Communists, but every mass organization is billed with that kind of information. Plus the very nature of Cuban internationalism is such that there is a constant focus on what's happening in the world. I mean not a week passes without some leader of liberation movement, a head of state, being in Cuba and Cubans prepare for that. They don't just go out and wave a flag and say We Welcome Seku Toure from Guinea, or We Welcome Juan Mari Bras, No! you are informed on why you should welcome this person. So I must say that the difficult thing would be for a Cubano to escape information.

Vargas— Were the communities organized?

Cole— Let me share with you the sense in which Cuban communities are organized but provide the flexibility for individual expression. The reason I feel the need to explain this is really because of my own stereotypes, some of the ideas I had before going to Cuba where I had read and theoretically understood socialism. But you know the press in this country can do a heavy trip on you, so I am thinking okay Cuba is going to be great. A place where everybody has enough to eat and free health care, but it's gonna be a drag, it's gonna be boring because it's gonna be so regimented and there will be no individual expression. On the contrary, I think there is the best form of individual expression because it's that individual expression which allows one's own ability, creativities to come out, but never at the expense of the collective. So yes, Cuban communities are organized. A typical expression is a young woman who is a member of the Young Communists because a

member of the Federation of Cuban Women, a member of a Committee for the Defense of the Revolution, her neighborhood organization, perhaps association with a trade union in her workplace, going to school and therefore perhaps a member of the Federation of University Students. I've just named 6 major mass organizations and in that sense a person's life is expressed in a series of collective situations and yet that woman will certainly express herself individually. I mean maybe she likes ballet, so she goes off to see Alicia Alonso. But maybe she doesn't dig the ballet and so therefore she would rather go listen to Los Papines a percussionist group. I mean she's going to wear whatever she wants to wear. She is going to fix her hair the way she wants to fix her hair. She will study what she wants to study but she will understand that although she will study what she wants to study the collective whole, the good of that whole society may suggest in fact that she study that out of interest but that she work in another field.

Vargas— Did you notice any distinction of social classes?

Cole— At the same time I would say that there is no such thing as a social class in Cuba. We should think that communism has arrived in Cuba. The Cubans would be the first to say that it is not yet there. A revolution is a process as Fidel said on the first of January of 1959: Cubans won on that day the right to make the Revolution. Cuba has certainly transformed itself. It's no longer a society of a small group of people with a whole lot and the rest of the people with nothing. There is no longer a class of people in Cuba who owns things, huge mansions, great big sections of beaches, large sugar cane plantations. That does not exist any longer. But one cannot say that there is absolute equality in Cuba. In the sense for example that everyone gets the same income. That everyone at this point in time has exactly the same material resources, but Cuba is moving in that direction. For example there are differences in income levels but there is nothing in Cuba that would represent discrepancy that you can see in this country. Let me be concrete. In Cuba the income would range 100 and 450 pesos. First of all we have to know that that is not much of a range. There are here in the U.S. who are rich and there are who can barely stay alive in terms of what their income is. But what is more significant to know is that in Cuba an individual with 100 to 450 pesos a month is not paying to see a doctor, not paying to get his teeth fixed, not paying even if they have to see a psychiatrist, going to school totally free including tuition and books, living in housing, which by law can not cost more

than 10% of his income. Actually for some Cubans it's almost a problem of what to do with money. Okay I'll go to the movies, but the movies cost so little. Okay I'll go to Lenin Park and I'll take my kids, but my kids can ride all day for 35 cents. I am not saying that Cubans do not know what to do with their money but I am saying that there is not the problem that we face of how are we going to get enough. The problem in Cuba is on the contrary especially given the difficulties of underdevelopment. Given the blockade and therefore given the scarcity of certain luxury goods. What am I going to spend my money on? I need to add one more thing to that in terms of the notion of differences among people. I am saying that, yes, there are differences in income. But I'm also saying that there has been an overall leveling in Cuba. I mean that this after all is what Che meant when he talked about the new man and the new woman, the new society. It meant that all of those old differences, for example between people who will work with their hands and people who will work with their heads would no longer exist. University professors get up and go to the cane fields if they have any political consciousness. They too have to cut cane as Fidel cuts cane. So that even if you work with your head you must also work with your hands. People who are fundamentally manual laborers must also study and therefore work with their heads. Before the Revolution there were tremendous difference between the city and the country so that the campesinos never saw a movie, didn't know what a museum was. The Revolution made a conscious decision not to continue to build up Havana but in fact to make sure that the country side was built up. The difference between men and women which I think is the way in which Cubans will struggle on the longest nevertheless shows progress. Differences between blacks and whites no longer exist in the institutional ways. So I think once you begin to do those things you can't in any genuine sense talk about social classes. You can only talk about workers who do this, some who do that, but they are workers.

Vargas— How do schools respond to the island's government interests?

Cole— I can say that I think that the overall interest of the government and the people of Cuba are the same. The government should be different. These should be the vanguard workers, those with the highest political consciousness, those people who through the process of emulation have set the pace. They should not have an interest which makes a "choque" with the people. Therefore I would say that what happens in the schools is not in conflict with

what the government wants but that there are certain points where in fact what an individual wants must be secondary to the needs of the Cuban people. Fidel talked about this in the speech of 1976 about the fact that the Cubans have exploded over education. There are very very few people in Cuba who are not involved in some sort of education. People want to study. But everybody can't be an engineer, or a doctor. I mean what kind of society would exist with only doctors and engineers. And in that sense the government has the responsibility to indicate to the schools what Cubans need. You cannot force somebody into something she might not have the ability simply because she has had the training. You must make known to the schools what it is that the government, that is the governing of the people, needs.

Vargas— Besides Spanish, what other languages are taught in schools?

Cole— One of the best ways to answer that is to share with you something I was reading the other day in an old Gramma. Michael Manley, the Prime Minister of Jamaica, was in Cuba last year. He said to Fidel, speaking with great warmth and obvious affection, but to Fidel as representative of the Cuban people. You know one of the things that the imperialists have done to divide us and to continue and to encourage the differences in language. But I want you to know that throughout the island of Jamaica a great effort is being made to teach the Spanish language. Fidel in responding to Michael Manley said, We must make a greater effort with English because not only is there an English speaking government 90 miles to the north of us, a government which is hostile to us but also 90 miles away from us Jamaica, an English speaking people who are our friends so we must make a greater effort with English. Of course languages are taught in schools but because of their emphasis on Internationalism Cubans also put an emphasis on language. I remember for example on my first trip to Cuba with the Black Organization Seminar we went to a place called Ospaal, Organization in Solidarity with the People of Asia, Africa and Latin America. There we were a group of northamerican blacks attempting to speak with a companero N. Vietnam. How are we going to talk to him? So the Companero of N. Vietnam speaks, that is then translated into Spanish, and the Spanish is then translated into English. We asked question, the question is in English, it is translated into Spanish and the Spanish into Vietnamese. Cubans go through that all the time.

Vargas— What students are entitled to a college level education?

Cole— Since the Revolution all education in Cuba is free and incredibly provided for. I think whenever we talk about Cuba's accomplishments we must also talk about its problems. It is a country that only has had 18 years of making the Revolution. A country that inherited tremendous underdevelopment. An economy dependent on U.S. imperialism. There is a problem in Cuba in the area of education simply to have enough books but the answer to your question directly is that every Cuban has the right to a University education. And that education is totally free including books and tuition. There is however in Cuba what is called simply education but we call it workstudy. A number of years ago Fidel spoke of an idea of the need to practice an idea of Jose Marti, the great apostle of the Americans. The idea in fact if one is going to really create that new kind of women and men that education must simultaneously be about study in the strict sense, and work in the real sense. And so beginning in what are the schools in the countryside, the junior high school level Cubans work for part of the day and study for part of the day. It's that which makes them understand that there is nothing superior to be an intellectual. It is also what makes them understand that if that country is ever to get out of underdevelopment it's going to take the effort of everybody.

Vargas— Speaking of the development change, which activities struck you the most?

Cole— What really struck me the most in Cuba was the sense of equality. First of all when you've lived in this country for this number of years you should almost begin to think, even if you know better, that there really is a gene for racism. That it is inevitable, that white folks got this special gene that makes them racist. I had never in my life lived in someplace for a few weeks, or a few months without being constantly conscious of racism. I mean that is what impresses me a lot about Cuba. In addition to that sense of equality there is a sense of vibrancy, of warmth. I mean Cuba is incredibly Latino, it's incredibly African in the sense that people get down, people party, people enjoy life, they work hard but they party hard. So those two things, the sense of equality and the sense of the quality and the vibrancy of the life.

Vargas— To what kind of economical level could you compare it to? Use the American standard.

Cole— Comparing it with the U.S. one would have to say that clearly in all senses Cuba has less, it is a poor underdeveloped country of 9,000,000 people. The U.S. is the richest, most technologically developed country in the world. It's on the second level of comparison, which I think is the crucial level,

that is how are goods and services distributed, that the superiority of Cuba is clear. Cuba has less but distributed equally. What one sees in Cuba is a leveling off in the sense of a healthy population, everybody is healthy. Sure you can find healthy people in this country. I am positive that the Rockefellers are not in poor health. I can go right now not just to N.Y. but within Amherst, Mass., and talk about people in a state of poor health, who are not eating well, who are not receiving medical attention as they should so that the sense that you get in Cuba is the sense of an absence of all the material things that are necessary, but you also have the sense that what there is is being shared in such a way that the level of development of the human being is incredibly high. We must not paint a picture of a paradise—no! There are still incredible problems in Cuba. For example, housing. There are still people in Cuba today living in huts, what are called "bohios". But before the Revolution 80% of the people lived in bohios and Mr. Dupont lived in a house with 125 servants, three months of a year I visited that house that no longer exists in Cuba. First of all Mr. Dupont had to leave. And the Batistas and his type had to leave. But you cannot in 18 years wipe away that kind of a problem. Cuba is working at it by microbrigades, where people leave their jobs. Those who remain have to catch the slack. They form these little construction brigades to build housing. It will be into the 1980's before Cuba can say that the entire population is adequately housed.

Vargas— How would you compare it to the standard of a Latin American country?

Cole— If you put Cuba within the context of Latin America I cannot think of any index on which Cuba will look badly. If it's on infant mortality, if it is in terms of the illiteracy rate, if it is in terms of percentage of students involved in school, if it is in terms of unemployment there is none in Cuba, if it is in terms of percent of women who are checked every year for uterine cancer: Cuba is going to look good. We also have to put that within the context that Cuba may not have been as badly off, at the time of the triumph of the Revolution, as many Latin American and Caribbean countries. What can you say when there is a country where there is no unemployment, where there are free health services and education.

Vargas— Why do you think it is at that level?

Cole— It's at that level because there was a socialist Revolution. It is not clear to me how you can do what Cuba has done short of a Revolution. That one can make certain reforms, that one can make certain improvements in the quality of life for some people, yes; but to totally transform a society

and bring about a quality of life for an entire population I think it is impossible short of changing the fundamental economy and political system.

Vargas— What has been the effect of the American and the Latin American embargo?

Cole— It has hurt. It has been a severe experience on Cuba. When you think about the early 1960's when Cuba could not get a single nail from the U.S., a bolt or a screw; and almost every machine was a U.S. machine, when Cuba had no paper, after all there were no trees because the imperialist cut down all the trees to plant sugar cane. What was Cuba to know? Those were severe times. What happened of course was that the Soviet Union in particular and other countries practiced their internationalism. Without that Cuba would not have survived. Yes there is a kind of contradiction there because if that embargo had not taken place it may well be that Cuba would not have reached the point it has reached, because it required the kind of discipline, and extra work and creativity to keep that machine going even though you didn't have the parts. I'm not saying blockades are great for countries and every country should have a blockade, of course not. No people should ever have to suffer the way the Cubans suffered because of the U.S. embargo. I am saying that the U.S. imposed blockade against Cuba brought out the real strength; the real stuff of the Cuban people. Obviously 18 years later we're able to say that despite that suffering the original attempt of that embargo, that is to crush the Cuban Revolution, did not succeed. That Revolution is now more consolidated than it has ever been.

Vargas— Between the U.S. and Cuba, who wanted to renew diplomatic relations and for what reasons?

Cole— That's really complex because it seems to me that on certain levels it is in the interest of both Cuba and the U.S. to renew relations, diplomatic relations, economic relations, the real question is the nature of that interest. What are the necessary conditions for improved relations? Cuba has been very clear: genuine relations with the U.S. will not take place until the U.S. unilaterally lifts the same blockade that the U.S. unilaterally imposed on Cuba. Cuba has been concerned about the presence of an entire U.S. military installation on Cuban soil, Guantanamo. The U.S. says that it is concerned about all the money that is owed to the N. American companies, that Cuba nationalized. Cuba says nationalized! Those people were robbing us. So there are definite differences. The U.S. says Cuba has to stop all this business about independence for Puerto Rico and calling international congresses and bringing up resolutions in the U.N. and that Cuba must

stop supporting Angola as when Cuba responded to the request of the MPLA by sending troops to help Angola crush the S. African racists. Cuba says: "Our principles, our revolution will not be negotiated". There are some severe differences. I think there will be years before we see total relations reestablished between the U.S. and Cuba. Why it is in Cuba's interest to do that. One, because as we have said the blockade has hurt Cuba. There are many things that would be easier for Cuba to get from the U.S. than going thousands of miles around to the Soviet Union. Secondly, because relations with the U.S. might decrease some of the more obvious expressions of aggression that the U.S. has had against Cuba. All the way from attempts to assassinate Fidel, to invading that island at the Bay of Pigs. Why does the U.S. want those relations? I think first of all because the policy of no relation has backfired. It's not Cuba that is isolated it's the U.S. that is isolated. This will host at the 11th world festival of youth and students 15,000 young people from all over the world. Cuba is the next site of the conference of non-aligned nations. Cuba is involved in economical conferences and relations with the Caribbean, with the nations of Asia, with the Soviet Union and socialist countries. Cuba is not isolated, it's the U.S. imperialists that are increasingly isolated from world respect, so it has not worked. Now what do you do if you are Jimmy Carter? Now what do you do? I think he'll say: Well actually we can get us some good business deals. There is a strong business interest in Cuba, Coca-Cola, General Motors, General Foods, are just lickin' their chops thinking about the profit that they are going to get. They better rethink it because they are not going to go back to Cuba under terms they were once there. I think the Carter administration assumes that if relations are more normal Cuba will no longer be such a cause "celebre," it will no longer be such an obviously outdated question within U.S. foreign policy. At the same time there must be incredible fear. The greatest fear being: What happens when the people in this country really come face to face with a country that has no unemployment. What happens when people of this country see that racism is not inevitable. What happens when the U.S. people see that sports is the right of the people, it's not a privilege. My feeling is that at the same time the Carter administration begins to make these overtures towards Cuba, lifting the travel ban for example, that we are going to see a severe ideological campaign against Cuba. The anti-Cuba propaganda will be severe. We can see it already. Why? Because the ultimate thing that the Carter administration wants to trade with Cuba and

have some relations with Cuba but the U.S. "Democracy" beats Cuban socialism any day. On the other hand we'll see Carter with one hand extended to the Cubans, pacifying the liberals and the progressives in this country. But is steady stroking with the other hand soothing the conservatives, telling them not to worry, people in the U.S. won't go for Cuba because they have political prisoners and no human rights and the people are standing in ration lines.

Vargas— If Americans can travel to Cuba how do you think this could affect the Cubans' social philosophy?

Cole— That is a serious question because Cubans more than myself must know what it's like to have your island invaded by the U.S. cultural as well as economic imperialism. Cubans after all went through a number of years where the only good thing was the in quotes "American thing," whether it was a car or your clothes or your food. That a whole revolutionary process was necessary to get rid of that idea. Now what would it mean if N. Americans in large numbers start coming back to Cuba. Are they going to bring back prostitution, are they going to bring back gambling? There must always be that concern, but the difference is not only has there been a Revolution, but the Revolution continues. It's the Cubans who grant visas. You don't just walk into Cuba. It's a sovereign state. Despite the U.S. ban on travel to Cuba thousands of U.S. citizens visited the island. For example, through the Venceremos Brigade over 2,500 N.Americans have traveled to Cuba since 1969. But as of March 18th last year Carter lifted the travel ban. I think we soon have direct airlights from the U.S. to Cuba. In terms of Cuban exiles, people in Cuba have very strong concern about these folks. All you have to do is turn the television and catch Little Havana in Miami to know why the Cuban community in this country, certain sectors of it, has been incredibly terroristic. It has been violent not only against Cubans in Cuba but against themselves, Cuban exiles or terrorists kill each other. All you have to do is pick up any Miami newspaper on any day to get that evidence. In addition there is their political goals which are to kill Fidel Castro and to take Cuba back. Would you welcome folk like that to your house? You would be a fool. On the other hand there are in this country Cubanos who do not have those attitudes. In any case they had no choice but to leave Cuba after the Revolution. They were young kids who knew nothing other than that they would rather be with mommy and daddy than anywhere else in the world. For example for those Cubanos it is very difficult. I per-

sonally know a few Cubanos who are not in this country who have returned to Cuba, they do no constitute large numbers.

Vargas— How can I get information to be able to travel to Cuba?

Cole— There are three obvious means. Right here in Amherst you could check with the Amherst regional of the Venceremos Brigade. The second would be to call a travel agent in N.Y. City, for example Anniversary Tours publicly, openly and legally advertises arranging tours to Cuba. And third of course would be to make a more direct contact for example through the Cuban interest section in Washington, D.C.

Vargas— Being an Anthropologist professor how do you evaluate the general process of the Cuban people and their government?

Cole— It is very very clear from all I've said so far that I am impressed by both the progress of the Cuban revolution and aware that problems still exist. What strikes me very deeply is that Cubans are in the process of creating what I would call a Revolutionary culture. What I see as an Anthropologist, is a radically different way of life. That is what I mean by a revolutionary culture. Much of what is happening in Cuba is predictable because we know certain elements, we know the African base, we know the Spanish input, we know the whole historical process of domination by the U.S. and we know what socialism means in terms of how a society is oriented and organized economically and politically. But I also maintain that we can not predict it all and that's a tremendous amount of the excitement of Cuba. In fact we had never before seen in the Western Hemisphere, in the Americas, in a Caribbean island, a revolutionary society. I am incredibly excited to see what it means. What does it mean to have a government which is explicitly anti-racist? What does it mean, in every day terms, that Cuba defines herself as a Latino-African People? What does this socialist revolution mean in terms of how men and women relate to each other? What does it do when you have a men both work than they must share the house hold tasks equally? What are kids going to be like when they see that their fathers and their mothers working equally in the household? What does it mean to produce a generation of children whose sense of geography is far beyond Cuba? What does it mean in terms of how people relate to each other when kids are familiar with Angola? When kids know that there are issues at stake in Puerto Rico. And I am excited by it in political terms, but the best sense of the word, in academic terms. What does it mean to be part of a revolutionary culture?

CUBA

Interview with **NORMA ALVAREZ** by Margarita Vargas

Place: Union City, New Jersey

Translation by Haydee Feliciano



Norma Alvarez

Vargas: What is your name?

Alvarez: My name is Norma Alvarez.

Vargas: Where were you born?

Alvarez: In the Province of Las Villas Cienfuegos.

Vargas: How old are you?

Alvarez: I am 31 years old.

Vargas: What year did you arrive in the U.S.A.?

Alvarez: I arrived on October 8, 1970 to Miami Airport. There I lived for two years. Then I moved to

Elizabeth, New Jersey and since then I remained in the area of a Cuban Hispanic Community.

Vargas: Where do you work?

Alvarez: I work at Vernon Royal, a factory in Elizabeth, N.J. It is a printing company where I operate a machine that binds notebooks and school books.

Vargas: What was the main reason that made you come to the U.S.?

Alvarez: Well, until 1969 I never had the desire to come to this country. Because I felt happy in Cuba. The reason that motivated me to come here was that the communist government did not allow me to continue studying at the Students Center simply because I was not an advocate to their regime.

Vargas: At that time what grade level had you accomplished?

Alvarez: I was in my third year of business school studying to be an accountant.

Vargas: What was the reason why the government discontinued your studies?

Alvarez: The reason why this happened was because I was a Catholic and would go to church. I taught Catholicism and the government would keep track of all this since I was not integrated to the activities of the "Union of Young Communists." They used this excuse to "purarme" meaning to exclude me from the Students Centers.

Vargas: What were their means to have knowledge of your daily activities?

Alvarez: Very simple, the Union of Young Communists, the Committee for the Defense of the Revolution (CDR) follow up people's activities. They do this by investigating or calling your neighbors. The CDR is in every block of your neighborhood.

Vargas: What did you do when the government denied you a diploma?

Alvarez: My dreams had been to finish my career as an accountant and be able to work as one among my

people. Not having this opportunity I found myself in the position to file papers to leave Cuba.

Vargas: How long did you have to wait before leaving Cuba?

Alvarez: A little less than two years.

Vargas: What did you do in the meantime?

Alvarez: In Cuba as soon as you express your desire to leave the country, if you are within the age of 17-53, you must work in the agricultural fields, before leaving Cuba you are required to complete laboral time in the fields. The waiting time is unlimited.

Vargas: What type of work did you do in the fields?

Alvarez: I worked doing various things. I planted the sugar cane. Fertilized the fields and all kinds of agricultural labor. This was done manually and it was strenuous work.

Vargas: During that time did you study?

Alvarez: No, from the moment I did not accept to renounce my religious belief my opportunities to study, a career in Cuba ceased.

Vargas: What was your daily working schedule?

Alvarez: We would leave Cienfuegos at 7 A.M. from sunrise to sunset.

Vargas: What were the means of transportation?

Alvarez: By trucks. These trucks were used to transport cattle to the slaughter house and was the only means of transportation. For us sometimes they had been cleaned of the cattle excretion and we had to ride on it.

Vargas: What other kinds of brigade existed?

Alvarez: There is the brigade of the farmers, the brigade of the federalist women (las federadas), the brigade of the communist youth and the brigade of the farmers workers would do volunteer work on Saturdays and Sundays.

Vargas: How many people were in your group?

Alvarez: First of all our group was called immigration brigade, composed exclusively of those leaving Cuba. We were approximately 95 to 112 women from ages 18-55 years of age.

Vargas: What was the difference in treatment within the various brigades?

Alvarez: The difference existed towards our immigration brigade, the reason being that we were leaving Cuba. When working at the fields we would be the last to be fed, depending on whatever food there was left. The trucks in which Las Federadas traveled were trucks with roof and benches. We had to travel standing one next to another holding on to whatever pole you could reach.

Vargas: What kind of food were you fed?

Alvarez: Well, whatever they gave us, many times corn meal with sugar, other times we had a woman in charge of the brigade who recognized our hard labor

in the fields. So we were given good food, but most of the time we ate what there was. I remember once we had rice with mashed potatoes. This must have been quite an experience for you Norma? Yes.

Vargas: Did you have freedom to go to any part of the Island?

Alvarez: Yes only if you had received permission from the superior brigade because I could not be absent from work.

Vargas: What do you know about the "Venceremos Brigade"?

Alvarez: To my knowledge the Venceremos Brigade are visiting Americans who sympathized with the Cuban Government and go to Cuba to identify themselves with the revolution. This Brigade is very fortunate. By this I mean that they have all the privileges that native Cubans would not have. For example, transportation on air conditioned Leilan buses made in England. Excellent housing accommodations and they are also served very good food. All this is prepared in advance by the Cuban government, therefore these people would not lack what they normally have in the U.S.A.

Vargas: Would the Venceremos Brigade relate to the Cuban people?

Alvarez: No.

Vargas: Does the V.B. have the liberty to purchase goods anywhere?

Alvarez: The V.B. foreign tourist, and specifically technicians have special stores to purchase souvenirs only. There is no need to buy food because the Cuban government supplies it to them. In the hotel Havana Libre they sell articles of high quality only to the tourist as contrast to if a native Cuban needs a pair of working shoes he would have to wait for his ration allotment.

Vargas: Who do you refer when you say technicians?

Alvarez: I am referring to Russian technicians who go to Cuba to instruct the Cubans of how to work agricultural and factory equipment. Also British who have brought plans Cubans have bought from them.

Vargas: Is there freedom of the press?

Alvarez: No, there is only one newspaper called the Gramma, the official paper of the government, and Castro himself in his famous interview with Barbara Walters stated he would not allow anyone to speak freely against him or the government.

Vargas: Norma, are there different social classes?

Alvarez: Yes, it exists between the people and the government. There are the government workers who are given the best houses and if you are in the military service you are entitled to 15 days at the beach in a good hotel with expenses paid. Mean-



i Oiganne Grito Courage! by Margarita Vargas, Springfield, Mass. 1976

while a factory worker who does not partake in the military service does not have these privileges.

Vargas: How do the schools respond to the interest of the government?

Alvarez: First of all, the schools belong to the government, there are no private schools. Therefore, education is free once a university level is achieved, you can choose whatever career you have in mind. But, once you achieve that goal if the government needs in another area you have to do as you are told. For example, if you have studied Cardiology and the Revolution needs you as a pediatrician, then you would have no choice but to study pediatrics, if not you lose privileges of continuing your studies.

Vargas: What students are entitled to a college education?

Alvarez: The privilege of a college education does not always depend upon one's grade but mostly on how politically active you've been.

Vargas: What progress has there been in the sugar industry and other products?

Alvarez: In comparison to the era prior to Castro's regime the production of sugar has decreased greatly. Before the revolution the farmers were the ones working the sugar cane fields but today is completely different. People of all occupations work in the sugar cane plantations. So what happens is that these people do not have any experience in farming, therefore many of the agricultural procedures are mishandled and much is wasted. For example, in the year 1969 Fidel set the goal of 10 million tons of sugar to be produced for that year. When the harvest ended not even 7 million tons of sugar was produced. On Jan. 1 when Fidel Castro speaks to the people he said that the goal of ten million tons had not been reached, stating that the reasons were because of the environmental conditions but the underlying reason be that of the unexperienced workers.

Vargas: How does the government motivate the sugar plantation workers?

Alvarez: If the plantation workers have a gross production of sugar cane are awarded with 15 days at a Varadero beach resort with paid expenses. Plus the opportunities to purchase any electrical appliance with their own earnings. These appliances are scarce and expensive, so usually workers can't afford to buy them.

Vargas: What is your opinion on Demographic Growth in Cuba?

Alvarez: Birth control pills are sold but Cuban women would rather have kids. It is convenient for them because for each child born the ration quota is increased. Also since the health care is free, they do

not have to worry about pregnancy fees, etc. This will gradually create a problem because the availability of basic every day needs and food supply decreases with the increasing of population.

Vargas: How does Castro control the crime level and delinquency acts?

Alvarez: There is a low crime rate. The penalty would be severe. For example, if you are caught stealing or in a delinquent act you could easily be executed or work in farms doing forced labor without any family visiting privileges.

Vargas: In the American society many crimes and sexual assaults we attribute to mental disorders. How does Cuba deal with this?

Alvarez: In Cuba this would never happen. I believe if there are 5 cases throughout the island this would be far too many. If you assume that claiming to be mentally incapable can get away with murder, rape or any social disorder in Cuba they would deal with your madness by putting a bullet right between your eyes. In this case I admire Castro's effective procedures so in this sense the Cubans feel at peace.

Vargas: Between Cuba and the U.S.A. who would benefit best from the renewal of diplomatic relations?

Alvarez: Because of the blockade Cuba would be benefiting the most. Cuba has to trade with the Europeans since the Cuban currency has no value. Cuba is forced to trade with its agricultural products. With these it obtains whatever machinery, weapons, prime materials and other basic necessities that normally would not be available. For example, in Spain you can find many Cuban products labeled "surplus of the Agrarian Reform." This is misleading because while you find an abundance of these Cuban products in many European countries, in Cuba there is rationing of these products.

Vargas: What would be U.S.S.R. reactions towards the renewed relations between the U.S. and Cuba?

Alvarez: I think they would be very pleased. It would be a relief on the U.S.S.R. since Fidel will not change his political philosophy, Russia will not have to worry about spending millions of dollars to support Cuba in its basic needs.

Vargas: If Americans can travel to Cuba, how will this affect the Cubans?

Alvarez: The Cuban people would be delighted to have relations with the U.S.A. because they feel this could be the only solution to free themselves of their misery. Castro's vain promises to eliminate the ration cards has made the people fear American Imperialism. But, on the other hand, he tours them about the island and Cubans would not be shocked if Cuba renews relations.



Photos by Ana Andrew

Collage by Margarita Vargas



"Springfield Girls Club Mural" by Nelson Stevens

AFRICA ON ACORN STREET

SPRINGFIELD GIRLS CLUB

by Sharleen Dickinson

Children run back and forth, to the store, to "my house," to "your house" and stopping at the Club. Young men lean on parked cars as the day sways into night.

"Hey boy, you better look out before you cross that street next time."

"No, the battery's gone or the starter's messed up, one."

"Yeah, I'm looking for some herb . . ."

"Damn, later for this car!"

All the while, up above, the past watches the present become the past. Africa in acrylics. Time held tight to a brick wall, looking down on mornings and nights.

Acorn Street cried out and wanted to be heard. So in 1975, Ray Horner, Clyde Santana and Nelson Stevens gave her a trumpet and taught her to sing. In 1976, Carl Yates joined the brothers to add his talents to the song.

The mural is composed of a variety of images, colors and moods reflecting the attitudes of the artists as well as Africa's Acorn Street. The first section, by Ray Horner, reveals a brother watching Black folks boogie-ing above young brown babies, sitting quietly and always waiting, always watching.

Pictures flow into pictures as time turns into time, but all speak of life, as in the Ahnk—the Egyptian symbol of eternal life. The corner turns and Horner shows the brother as an Egyptian, the face of a Pharaoh, watching young Egypt dance between pyramids, and again there is life as the Ahnk stands out in green against the brown, black, orange and blue.

The next section, by Carl Yates, presents West Africa in gradations in brown of large profiles, and green Ghanain symbols of unity. The border is another design from Ghana, but the most dominant

feature in this section is a green and brown mask figure.

The fourth section, by Nelson Stevens, is larger and very commanding with a variety of symbols and images. Three faces come at you; a woman, a man and a child. These faces are multicolored and are surrounded with explosions of images, upon colors, upon images. To the right of these faces is the profile of a woman and what appears to be a picture of her mind. Her face has an attitude of determination. Her mind presents the mystery of a chess game. The pieces are red, white and blue against the red, black and green and the brothers and sisters are winning this game. Again, Ghanain symbols, profiles, free forms as well as the map of Africa complete this section.

The fifth section is the same as the third, but this time Carl Yates uses gradations in night colors of indigo, brown and black.

The last two sections of the mural, by Clyde Santana, project us into the technology of new Africa with sharp angles and objects in reds, purples, pinks and blues. The sections are outlined in black, producing a kind of stained glass effect.

Children and adults are quiet now on Acorn Street. Lighted windows reveal that most activity is going on inside. Meanwhile, Africa smiles down on Africa from the view of an exciting mural on top of a Girls Club on Acorn Street in Springfield.

ARTISTS:

1975 Ray Horner—Graduate Student
Clyde Santana—Graduate Student
Nelson Stevens—Professor
1976 Carl Yates—Freshman Year



"Present and Future" by Edward Cohen

THE NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR BLACK STUDIES

by Kathy Rose

In the 1960's the Black revolution emerged to confront the status quo in America. Part of this revolution was the Black student movement, which directly challenged the American educational system and the racial attitudes and practices it fostered. Out of this confrontation emerged contemporary Black Studies programs. This revolution was broad and deep. Black students and educators demanded an education that was relevant, Black oriented and Black controlled.

The period 1969-1972 was a high point for Black Studies. Almost 500 programs were established and at least 1,300 colleges and universities offered a minimum of one course on the Black experience. The rapid expansion was short-lived. By 1972, the outline of the counterattack emerged. The earliest attacks were in the form of financial cutbacks. This first affected programs that were started with "soft" funding or insufficient support. By 1975, there were only 200 Black Studies programs. Where some programs failed, others succeeded, and many grew and became permanent parts of universities. Nevertheless, this attack has put Black Studies into a period of reassessment. The most direct attack forced reductions in program budgets, reduced student aid, and reduced faculty size. These cutbacks were justified by those who claimed that Black Studies was too politicized, that academic standards were low, and that "reverse racism" was being practiced.

On March 18-21, 1975, a Black Studies National Conference was held at and sponsored by the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. The Conference attempted to stimulate thought on four basic questions concerning Black Studies: Where? Who? Why? and How? Participating were Federal City College, University of Pittsburgh, University of Massachusetts, New York University and others.

On July 16-18, 1975, a meeting was held at Educational Testing Service, Princeton, NJ. The Princeton Conference was the follow-up action initiated by Dr.

William Harris. The format of the Princeton Conference was of an informal structure due to the small group of participants. Joe Williams of ETS brought greetings to the group and gave a brief overview of ETS's role as host. The informal sessions were facilitated by Bertha L. Maxwell. Concepts were expressed in terms of needs, goals, objectives, and activities to meet such needs. This meeting provided an opportunity to structure the concepts as they would relate to a national organization whose priority would be voluntary cooperative coordinated effort with national organizations and institutions who might offer support for Black Studies programs.

Dr. William King, Vice Chairperson and Assistant Professor of Black Studies and Dr. William Pitts, Director of Black Education Programs at the University of Colorado, convened a Black Studies conference on November 13-15 at the University of Colorado, Boulder, Colorado, in order to facilitate Regional interest in the National Council of Black Studies.

Participants in the Conference were primarily from such areas as California, Oregon, Washington, Texas, Arizona, Indiana, Montana, and Michigan.

Dr. Herman Hudson, Vice Chancellor of Afro-American Affairs at Indiana University also attended this meeting. Dr. Hudson offered the facilities of Indiana University for NCBS' national office and agreed to host a constitutional convention to draft some guidelines for the functioning of the organization.

Another planning conference meeting was held on April 11-13, 1976 at the University of Indiana. The second annual planning conference for the Executive Board of NCBS was again held in Princeton, New Jersey on July 7-9, 1976. It was hosted by the Educational Testing Service. The focus of this meeting was the revision of the NCBS constitution drafted during the conference at Indiana University and to plan for the first annual convention to be hosted by Dr. William Nelson of Ohio State University in February



Chester Davis

1977. After two and a half days of debate and discussion a Constitution for NCBS was approved by the Board, an eleven region structure was established, and a convention format was adopted—Black Studies, Mobilization for Survival: Development, Substantiation, Standardization, Accreditation, Evaluation, and Careers. At last NCBS was more than the dream that had begun in Charlotte less than two years before. The National Council for Black Studies had become a reality!

The first annual meeting was held and sponsored by Ohio State University on February 16, 1977 and over 500 people attended. The theme of the Ohio State conference was Mobilization for Survival. This conference was attempting to find solutions to the problems that are now confronting Black Studies. These problems include the fiscal crisis, the question of standards and legitimacy, the roles of tenure and publications in Black Studies, the need for evaluation and accreditation, the development of a student constituency and Black Studies careers. Most important, scholars from across the country came together in Columbus, Ohio to mobilize a national effort to build sufficient support for Black Studies to guarantee its perpetuation for generations to come.

On June 16-17, 1977, The National Council for Black Studies Representatives, Dr. Bertha Maxwell, Chairperson, Dr. Beverly Ford, Secretary, Dr. Joseph J. Russell, Executive Director, and Dr. William

Nelson and Ms. Yolanda Robinson, 1977 Convention Chairperson met with Professor Chester Davis, National Council for Black Studies Regional I Representative to plan for the 1978 second annual convention.

The meeting was convened at New Africa House at the University of Massachusetts/Amherst and an all day discussion on budget and other topics comprised the agenda. UMass participants were L. Van Jackson, Director, Black Cultural Center, Bill Owens, Massachusetts State Senator, John Bracey Jr., Chairperson W.E.B. Dubois Department of Afro-American Studies, Dr. Vere Chappell representing Dr. Paul Puryear, Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Provost.

On June 17th, the National Council for Black Studies group, along with Senator Owens met with Dr. Ernest Lyton, Vice President for Academic Affairs, representing Dr. Robert Wood, President of UMass, to discuss sources of funding for the Convention and particularly support from UMass.

The second annual meeting will be held April 15-18, 1978 at University of Massachusetts/Amherst. It is expected that the participation will be around 700 people and a lot more student participation. The date of April will also contribute to a greater registration concerning weather conditions and also the location being on the eastern seaboard.

The theme for the UMass conference will be beyond survival: Where do we go from here to make



Kathy Rose



"Fertility Pattern Mural" by Donna Jones

Black Studies a national force with the American academic community? There is a desire for the students to become involved and to stress their concern or provide some input. The students have an entire day to run their own work shops, organized and run by students, with help from professors by student request.

The basic format has not been worked out as yet. The conference will last three and a half days. The

first day will be registration and organization of three workshops running concurrently. The last day will be on wrap up and conclusion. There will also be a banquet and entertainment. The ultimate objective is to address itself to concerns to develop Black Studies as a national force in higher education utilizing lessons learned over 10 years of Black Studies. Significant progress was made toward planning for an exciting, productive convention for 1978.



Photo by Edward Cohen



"Hoo-Doo Bone Series" by Nelson Stevens

BOOK REVIEW

THE WOMEN AND THE MEN

by NIKKI GIOVANNI

William Morrow & Co., N.Y., 1957

We Black people have a habit of crowning the Kings and Queens of our culture and then push them to the back of our minds because some one new has caught our attention. But our royal brothers and sisters are still here, producing more masterpieces for education and entertainment. This is the case with Nikki.

Her latest book is a collection of poetry she wrote from 1970 to 1975. The forty-two poems in this volume are grouped into three sections: "The Women, The Men And Some Places."

Nikki's style is basically the same; small case letters and lines running into lines, freeing punctuations so that the reader may make their own choice as they read.

But the difference is in Nikki's tone. Over the five year span of this book, the reader will find that her tone is subdued and somewhat reflective. Her poetry speaks of loneliness, and the need to be alone. She talks about youth and the self-contentment of growing old. But her genius is most vividly displayed when she writes about places. These places included not only Swaziland, Alabama and a park, but the places in Nikki's mind and yours. Places like the night, the solitude of writing poetry, and the future of our children.

The Women and The Men is a book that many of us will pass by but won't buy now, but most of us will

find it later. Later, when we've found the "other things" we're looking for now. Nikki's found those "other Things" as she demonstrates in her poem from this volume,

"Revolutionary Dreams"

*i used to dream militant
dreams of taking
over america to show
these white folks how it should be
done
i used to dream radical dreams
of blowing everyone away with my
perceptive powers
of correct analysis
i even used to think i'd be the one
to stop the riot and negotiate the
peace
then i awoke and dug
that if i dreamed natural
dreams of being a natural
woman doing what a woman
does when she's natural
i would have a revolution*

*Nikki Giovanni was born in Tennessee and raised in Ohio. She lives in New York City with her son Tommy. Among her previous books are **Black Feeling**, **Black Talk/Black Judgement**; **Gemini** and **My House**.*

Sharleen Dickinson



Photo by Edward Cohen

THIS NIGGER'S CRAZY

RICHARD PRYOR

by Kim Hill

Richard Pryor, a scintillating black man born and raised an urbane man is today industry's top comedian. Pryor is known for his mockspastic movements as well as performing a one man free-form theatre. Armed chiefly with his wit, he talks about racism in a way that he pokes fun at whites and blacks alike. Pryor mirrors the black condition without exploiting it. He transcends the stereotypical situations in which blacks are labeled and he becomes the prototype with which all black people are familiar. Watching and listening to Pryor is like watching yourself. He marks all victims of society on stage, it can be hilarious or it can be painful.

In the sixties Pryor experienced his first national exposure. As his success mounted Pryor had restraints imposed on his unique style of comedy. The white show-business establishment admonished Pryor to stay within the framework of what white America's ethics would stand for. After being told what and what was not appropriate for Pryor's television debut, as well as having and experiencing personal problems, Pryor had a downfall, he had a nervous breakdown right on stage in Las Vegas. He then withdrew himself from the national scene. During this period of depression he became heavily involved in drugs (cocaine).

By the early seventies Pryor got his shit back

together. Once again he drew national attention for his role as pianoman in the hit movie Lady Sings the Blues. Also he coscripted Blazing Saddles with Mel Brooks, and received an American Academy of Humor Award. Some of his LP's were Gold and Platinum sellers and he also received a Grammy.

More important is the fact that Pryor re-emerged from his state of depression. He once again told jokes about "the people that society would rather forget." His black militants, junkies, winos, whores, and hustlers still were a part of his scripts. He rebelled against the white showbusiness establishment.

Donald Bagle of Ebony magazine seems to feel that "Pryor's comedy was used to uncover shared hidden terrors, to let us know not only what others thought of these downtrodden characters, but what they thought of themselves." Other people feel that Richard Pryor's criticism and jokes about his people go too far. These people are the ones who are embarrassed by Pryor. They feel the need to make the public realize that there are other positive images in the black community. I used to feel the same way as these people, but as you can see now I realize what Pryor has gone through and tried to do for his people and now I appreciate him and his talent more than ever before.



Marion Brown by Edward Cohen



Voices of New Africa House '76 by Edward Cohen

